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# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL









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Rembrandt Photogravure.)

1902. Alexandra Coronation day  
August 9th

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

AN ANTHOLOGY OF  
POEMS, STORIES, ESSAYS, DRAWINGS  
AND MUSIC BY BRITISH AUTHORS,  
ARTISTS AND COMPOSERS

PUBLISHED BY THE "DAILY MAIL":  
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Dedicated to  
Her Majesty the Queen

as a Tribute of Music, Art, and Letters to Her gracious appeal  
on behalf of the poorest of Her people

Charles Marshall

Alfred Austin

A. J. London:

Arthur W. Collins

Alwin Birnie

Edna Adams

H. C. Mackenzie

Edward

Poynter

Hall Cairns

amateur

Edward Elgar

to Compton

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Solomon I Solomon

Robert Hichens

Albert Chesalier

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W pett Ridge

Edwin J. J. J. J.

Hubert Henry Davies

## FOREWORDS

*THE Royal Fund in aid of the Unemployed should, we may hope, conjure fruitfully from the procession of singers and narrators under headship of the Lady of the Land, bearer of Light into a region of thick darkness, where economists are groping for a path. The heart of the nation responds to its illustrious leader, and it is for the nation's mind to work out the imperative means. My regret is heavy that, owing to a recent mishap, I am unable to join with my fellows in the good work. But I know their voices, and can feel assured that the exclusion of one from such a choir will not be missed.*

GEORGE MEREDITH.



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THE  
QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

A PATENT OF NOBILITY

*(From an unpublished Poem)*

I

TO be by blood and long descent  
A member of a mighty State,  
Whose greatness, main-girt, but unpent  
By ocean, makes the World more great ;

II

That, ranging limitless, hath won  
A Rule more wide than that of Rome,  
And, journeying onward with the sun,  
In every sea hath found a home ;

III

That, keeping old traditions fast,  
Still hails the things that are to be,  
And, firmly rooted in the Past,  
On Law hath grafted Liberty ;—

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

iv

That is a birthright nobler far  
Than titled claim or "Right Divine"  
From far-off rapine, wanton war,  
And I could feel this birthright mine.

v

And not the lowliest hand that drives  
Or share or loom, if so it be  
Of British strain, but thence derives  
A Patent of Nobility.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SKY

BY ROBERT HICHENS

**M**EN say in Sicily that, at certain times, Mount Etna throws out fumes which, mysteriously affecting the condition of sensitive bodies, also penetrate to the minds, the souls within them, turning those minds and souls to a brooding weariness, or to a more terrible and active despair. Calamity, in such moments, seems stealthily to be issuing from the tremendous mountain, floating out like the plume of smoke from the crater's mouth. Fear glides down the lava-stricken flanks to the villages set among the vines. The spirit of distress goes abroad upon the land, and people walk heavily as if near to some nameless fate.

I had heard of this with smiling disbelief till one autumn day, at the end of the month of October, I chanced to be travelling on



BY SIR EDWARD J. POYNTER, P.R.A.



## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SKY

muleback in the Sicilian mountains within sight of Etna, accompanied by my guide, Gaspare. The sky was a dull grey, for there was scirocco, and the summit of the volcano was hidden in sullen wreaths of vapour. We had been riding for some hours on narrow and precipitous paths, along rocky slopes sparsely dotted with olive trees and barbary figs. Evening was approaching, and I was glad when I saw, on the crest of a hill not far off, the huddled roofs of Marza, the village where we were going to pass the night. I was glad, for I was tired and unnaturally depressed.

It seemed to me that the rumours I had smiled at must be true, that some horrible influence was at work in the twilight, and that the scirocco had carried it from the black lips of the crater, and was spreading it like a veil upon these arid heights. Never before had I felt so hopeless as I did now, so apprehensive in the face of night. Yet my circumstances were happy. My health was good. And I had set forth in the morning gaily, full of the anticipation of the free and careless wanderer.

What was wrong with me?

I glanced at Gaspare.

He was not afflicted. A native of the mountain town of Castiglione, his narrow features, steady, brilliant eyes, level brows, and small hands with pointed fingers, reminded me of the Arabs of North Africa. He had, too, their hue of bronze and impassive expression. I felt sure that there was a strain of Arab blood mingled with the Sicilian blood in his veins, no unlikely thing seeing that he was a native of an Isle that has been the battleground of the nations, the prey of men from Africa as of the Greeks, the Normans, how many others.

In this twilight hour Gaspare, with the wide-eyed contentment of a Hassan or a Mustapha, rode sideways on his mule, dangling his long legs, gazing into the grey vacancy of the scirocco-laden evening, and singing a tune that was full of Eastern monotony.

I envied him. I was even morbidly jealous of his indifference

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

to the stealthy forces which had destroyed for the moment my capacity for happiness. And I found myself wishing, with a sort of desperation, that I were Gaspare, a being touched with the strange calm of fatalism, ignorant of the complicated mechanism of modern, nerve-destroying Western life.

"I wish I were you, Gaspare!" I said. "I wish to Heaven I were you!"

"And I wish I were a rich English Signore," he placidly replied. And then he sang once more.

My foolish wish persisted. I felt as if it were borne by scirocco from the gaping chasm upon Etna's summit. I thought of it as one of those fumes of which Sicilians speak. I strove to drive it away, but could not, though its futility tormented me, filled me with contempt for the mind that contained it.

When we were near to Marza I drew rein for a moment and looked across the mountains.

There had been no sunset glory, but in the West, near the village, a jagged rent in the grey disclosed a section of pale green sky, in which, immediately above a rock pointed like a tooth, was a most strangely shaped cloud. It resembled an Arab wrapped in a burnous, mounted on a camel, and travelling, as we were, towards Marza. As I gazed at it the resemblance grew more striking. I was looking at some Bedouin of the sky.

I called Gaspare's attention to the cloud, and told him of the Arab's dress and of the movements of the camel, adding that I was sure he must have had Arab ancestors.

"*Chi lo sa?*" was his calm reply.

The notion did not interest him. I looked again at the cloud and thought that, were I Gaspare, I would go back to the tribe of my wild forefathers, to the desert men who know true freedom in the spacious countries of the sun. If only that Bedouin of the sky were a messenger sent to summon me to the life of liberty!

## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SKY

Just after dark I rode into the filthy street of Marza, and pulled up before the door of the house in which I was to pass the night.

I had supped, drunk my coffee, smoked my cigar. Gaspare, having stabled the mules and eaten with me, had gone out through the kitchen I knew not where, to sleep perhaps on a bundle of straw beside the beasts. The old man of the house, an ex-stationmaster, voluble and flattering, yet not without distinction, had cleared the table and retired with a "*Buona notte, Signore!*" I was alone.

Now this is what happened.

Directly I was alone I undressed and threw myself on the narrow bed in the corner of the room. There were two doors in the room, one communicating with the kitchen in which our meal had been prepared, the other with the village street. Both were shut, and the street door was locked. I had seen to that myself. I lay on the bed with a candle beside me, and gave myself up to a despairing mood. Never at any other time in my life have I experienced such a sensation of impotent misery as swept over me that night. In the windless weather, in the wet heat, which suggested sweat dripping from fever-stricken Nature, I felt the volcano I could not see, like the hand of a malignant hypnotist laid upon me, bidding me enter some hideous region of trance. It seemed to me that I was under a curse which could never be lifted because its root was in my temperament. I had been born with a temperament that could only be at home in a body belonging to another race than mine. I had the nature, the soul in fact, of a poor Sicilian-Arab,—always Gaspare and the cloud shape were with me in fantastic connection, as if the cloud shape were one of those Arabs who in the past descended upon Sicily, as if Gaspare were the descendant of the cloud shape,—and this nature, this soul, had been thrust by mistake into an English body, condemned

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

to conform to English prejudices, customs, requirements. And to-day scirocco had brought the message from Etna, and to-night, for the first time, I knew myself for what I was, a contradiction, a hybrid monster, a struggle incarnate, an endless battle.

I felt inclined to spring up, rush out into the filthy street, throw myself down on the stones, and dash myself against them, until the cruel something within me,—demon of scirocco, demon of Etna,—lay dead, lay murdered, deep down under the pulse of my heart.

Let those rail who have never been steeped in scirocco under the great shadow of Etna.

My misery needed an appropriate setting. I thrust out my hand to the candle and gave it black darkness.

I do not know how long I lay in the dark before I heard outside the street door a soft pad of feet, and then the harsh, groaning roar that a camel gives when its master strikes its legs to make it lie down.

I sat up on the bed. The roar was repeated, was prolonged. To my ears it was quite unmistakable. I knew how it would end, in a thick grunt as the beast reluctantly folded its legs under it and collapsed upon the stones. In an instant I heard the grunt. There followed a pause, and then a knock upon the door. Instinctively I called out "*Arhoha!*" although I knew the door was locked.

As my voice died away the door was opened, and a tall Arab wrapped in a burnous, the hood of which was drawn over his head, entered. The Arab shut the door and said, in a deep, grave voice—

"*Es—salamou a'likoum!*"

I answered—

"I salute you."

I saw the man distinctly, and it did not occur to me to wonder then how I could see him in a dark room. When I

## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SKY

had spoken he stretched out his hand, took mine, kissed it, unclasped it, and carried his own hand to his lips in Arab fashion. Then he stood for a moment staring at me with his lustrous eyes. I thought of the Bedouin of the sky travelling upon his camel towards Marza, of my crazy wish to be Gaspare, to go back to the tribe of my wild forefathers, to know the true freedom of the countries of the sun. Some men say that if you desire a thing with sufficient intensity at last it has to happen. At that moment a mad fancy came to me. I stared back at the Arab, and I said—

“You have come for me!”

He did not reply, but it seemed to me that he was considering me with profound attention. At last he opened his lips, and I heard him mutter the word, “*Roumi!*” Then he turned, went through the second doorway into the kitchen, and shut the door behind him. Black darkness closed in upon me again.

I lifted myself up in the bed on my elbows and listened for the sound of movement in the kitchen. I heard nothing. But far away in the village I caught the twang of a guitar, and a hot, tremulous voice singing an Italian song. It recalled me to reality. I remembered where I was, and I said to myself that I must be mad or dreaming. Had the fumes from Etna turned my brain? I sprang out of bed and went barefooted to the street door. There was no camel lying there. The street was deserted. Far away I still heard the guitar and the tremulous tenor voice. I even caught some words:

“Addio, Lucia, m'appellano,  
Il vento già compare—”

I shut the door, stood still for a moment. I remember feeling the cold from the floor striking upwards through the soles of my feet. Then I went to the kitchen door, opened it, and looked in.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

Gaspare was sleeping there! In a narrow bed in the corner by the hearth I saw his thin figure sitting up. The wooden shutter was not drawn across the window, and a faint light filtered in. Gaspare's eyes were wide open, but I could see by the glassy look of them that he was asleep. In his sleep he was talking excitedly in the Sicilian dialect, which I cannot properly understand. Now and then, however, he used an Italian word. Twice I heard him say "*Cammello*" (camel), and once, "*No, no! Io non sono Arabo.*" (I am not an Arab.)

"Gaspare!" I said, going a little closer to the bed.

He took no notice, but went on talking. Now and then he paused, as if listening, and the impression grew in me that in a dream he was holding a colloquy with some one. I thought of the Arab I had seen go into the kitchen only a moment before. Why had he gone there? Where was he now?

Gaspare's passion seemed to be rising. His voice was louder. There was sweat upon his face, and he was grasping the edge of the bed with both hands. His body, leaning back towards the wall, looked tense, as if it were bracing itself to resist some force which was trying to drag it forward.

"I won't go! I won't go!" I heard him say.

As I looked I knew it was the Arab who was enticing him. He had scrutinised me, had muttered "*Roumi!*" with the measureless contempt of the Mussulman for the Christian, had gone into this room as one in search. He had come for Gaspare. When I realised that, my morbid envy of the afternoon returned upon me with the keener intensity, with the sharp edge, as it were, that night with its silence and darkness gives to the strange desires of men.

Why was not I Gaspare? I would go. But he, summoned to that very freedom for which to-night I was sick with morbid desire, resisted the summons with fury. A contempt came upon me, and then the determination to substitute myself for Gaspare,

Alma-Tadema 20-1905



BY SIR LAWRENCE ALMA-TADEMA, R. A.



## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SKY

to force this midnight messenger to be content with me. But how? I saw no one in the room but the guide, grinding his teeth, staring with his glassy eyes, and muttering the fierce exclamations of a man in a nightmare. I saw no one else, yet I felt the presence of the Arab, and, with a spring, I placed myself in front of Gaspare and facing the room. Instantly the sound of the dreamer's voice died away, and I heard a faint rustling as he sank back in the bed upon the pillow. The succeeding silence seemed to me unnaturally intense. I stood quite motionless looking at the square of the window through which the moonlight filtered. Then I spread out my hands, seeking to touch, to feel the intruder, whom I had seen, whom now I could not see. My fingers moved in space, my hands, encountering nothing, dropped to my sides. I listened. Nothing. Then I turned round to the bed behind me. Gaspare was sleeping calmly. I looked at him closely. There were still drops of perspiration upon his forehead, and his hands, which lay outside the bedclothes, were clenched.

I waited for a long time, hearing only the sound of his regular breathing. Then at last I returned to my own room. I sat down on the edge of the bed and thought. What did it all mean? What had happened? How much had been trance, how much—if anything—reality? I was wide awake now. That was certain. I had surely been wide awake all the time. My feet had felt the cold of the brick floor. My eyes had seen the empty street. My ears had heard the distant Sicilian singing to the guitar. And yet—it was inexplicable. Again I thought of the Etna spell, of the rumours that are on men's lips in Sicily.

Then I got into bed, shut my eyes, and tried to sleep. After a while I began to feel drowsy, I began to say to myself, "It is coming." The little sandman was not far off. The dust of his poppies was falling on my eyelids. My soul was floating away

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

somewhere, to some far horizon line, like a sea-bird on a wave, was floating . . . was . . . floating . . .

A harsh noise struck through my brain, the roaring groan of a camel whose legs were being struck. I sat up in the bed. The groaning grew louder, more fierce and bitter, reached a climax, seeming to mount up. I knew why. The beast, which had been lying down, had been beaten to its feet. Instantly I sprang out of bed. But I did not go to the street door. A strange idea had flashed upon me, a strange certainty, I might say. And I ran first to the kitchen where Gaspare was sleeping. His bed was empty. I had known it would be. The window, which was close to the ground, was open, and a bush of roses which grew beneath it had recently been trampled upon. Some of the flowers had been pressed partially into the brown soil. I drew back, after one swift glance, and in a moment had thrown on some clothes, put on my socks and boots and was out in the street.

Which way had they gone?

That was my thought. I glanced to right and left. To the right the narrow street rose towards the centre of the village. To the left it sank towards open ground, which swept down eventually to the sea coast nearly a thousand feet below. From this direction came still the sound of a guitar and of a voice singing—

“Speranza mia, non piangere,  
È il marinar fedele,  
Vedrai tornar dall’Africa  
Tra un anno queste vele——”

In such a moment, when there is nothing to guide the mind, the merest trifle is enough to bring it to a decision. I hurried down the street towards the sound of the music, led by the one word “Africa.”

The dawn was just breaking. I passed the house whence the

## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SKY

music came—there was a marriage *festa* there I learnt afterwards—came out of the village and descended by a mountain-path towards the sea. When I had gone perhaps half-way to it, I met a Sicilian road-maker in leggings and a woollen cap coming up with Gaspare, who was clad only in his shirt, and who looked shamefaced when he saw me.

“*Ecco un povero sonnambulo, Eccellenza!*” said the roadmaker, pointing to Gaspare, who actually blushed through his bronze skin.

A little later, as we rode down on our way to Messina, I questioned Gaspare as to his dream of the night. All I could gather from him was that he had dreamt that the “Arabo,” of whom I had spoken when we watched the cloud shape above the rock, had come to take him away—“*lontano*,” as he expressed it—that he had resisted, but that the “Arabo” had been too strong for him, had taken him out by the window and put him on a “*Cammello*,” and that, as they were riding away, he awoke and found the road-maker shaking him by the shoulders.

And my explanation? I have none. My own idea is that I must have been asleep when I thought I saw the Arab come in from the street and go into the kitchen, and that the distant sound of the guitar woke me. For that I was wide awake when I went to the street door, and subsequently, is certain. Was Gaspare’s dream, then, the continuation of mine? Did our two dreams compose a serial dream? As Gaspare says—

“*Chi lo sa?*”

My conviction is now, and was then, that Etna was the cause of all. But that morning, as we rode down to the sea, the Tramontano was blowing, the sky was a sheet of azure, the Etna spell was broken, and, somehow, I did not care.

## A CAROL FOR CHARITY

WINTER, friend of health and wealth,  
Hailed of goodly girls and boys,  
Slays the poor by strength and stealth,  
Makes their lives his lifeless toys.

One boy goes galloping over the moorland,  
Wild with delight of the sunshine and speed,  
Blithe as a bird on his bleak bright foreland,  
Glad as the wind or his own glad steed.

One, with darkness and toil fast bound,  
Bound in misery and iron fast,  
Drags his nakedness underground,  
Sees the mine as the world at last.

Winter, lord of laughing Yule,  
Winter, weeping on his dead,  
Bids us ease his iron rule,  
Bids us bring his poor men bread.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

Nov. 24, 1905.

# RING OUT, WILD BELLS

TENNYSON.

A. C. MACKENZIE.

*Allegretto, un poco agitato.*

*mp*

1 Ring out, . . . wild bells, . .  
2 Ring out . . . the want, . .

*Allegretto, un poco agitato. (♩ = 72.)*

*p* *cres.*

*mf* <sup>3</sup>

. . . to the wild . . sky, . . The fly - ing cloud, . . the frost - y  
. . . the care, the sin, . . The faith - less cold - - ness of the

*p*

*mp*

light: . . . The year . . . is dy . .  
times; . . . Ring out, . . . ring out . .

*p* *mf*

*Ped.* \*

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

ing in the night: . . . Ring out, wild bells, . . . and let him  
my mourn - ful rhymes, . . . But ring the full - er min - strel

die. . . . Ring out the old, . . . ring in the  
in. . . . Ring in the val - iant man and

new, . . . Ring, hap - py bells, . . . a - cross the  
free, . . . The lar - ger heart, . . . the kind - lier

snow: . . . The year is go - ing, . . . let . . . him  
hand. . . . Ring out the dark - ness of the

*mf* *p* *mf* *f* *p* *dol.*

*cres.*

# RING OUT, WILD BELLS

*mf*  
 go: land, Ring out the false, ring in the true,  
 Ring in the Christ that is to be,

*mf* *cres.*  
*Ped.* \* *Ped.* \* *Ped.* \*

*f* *poco rit.* *f*  
 ring . . . out the false, ring in the true.  
 ring . . . in the Christ that is to be.

*mf* *f*  
*poco rit.*

*a tempo.*  
*f* *mf*  
*Ped.* \* *Ped.* \* *Ped.* \* *Ped.*

1ma volta. 2da volta.  
*mp* *p* *f* *ff* *dim. pp*  
*Ped.* \* *Ped.* \*

# A SUPPER WITH IRVING

## *A REMINISCENCE*

BY ARTHUR W. PINERO

MUCH has been written lately about the old Beefsteak room at the Lyceum Theatre, and of the sumptuous suppers given there to his friends by the late Sir Henry Irving. To many people the idea must have been conveyed that these suppers were of constant occurrence ; that they were, in fact, almost a regular, nightly addition to the performance upon the stage. This was far from being the case. No doubt, Irving pretty frequently entertained a party of friends, after the play, in the little room ; but far more often it was used as a place in which, over a simple meal, he could discuss with his business-manager and his stage-manager, Mr. Bram Stoker and Mr. Loveday, the affairs of the theatre.

I supped in the Beefsteak room for the first time in 1880. Irving was then forty-two and at the zenith of his powers, physical and artistic. As to the former, it was in this year that he told me he had never had a headache or toothache. The reason for my being summoned to the Beefsteak room was not merely a social one. Irving had commissioned me to write a one-act piece, a "curtain-raiser," for which he was to pay me fifty pounds—knowing full well that I would gladly have accepted fifty shillings for it ; and, the little play being finished, I was, after supper, to read it to him and to Mr. Loveday and Mr. Stoker.

I, too, in those days, shared the belief—prevalent then as now—that the suppers in the Beefsteak room were invariably costly and magnificent ; and when I took my seat proudly at Irving's table, it was with an appetite that had been carefully cultivated for the

## A SUPPER WITH IRVING

occasion. There was a little quiet talk between the "chief" and his lieutenants as to the way in which the evening's performance had passed off, and then a servant appeared bearing a large, covered dish. It was placed before Irving, who gently tapped the cover with a fish-knife. "I don't know, my boy," he said, addressing me, "whether you like these things ; but we"—including Stoker and Loveday with a wave of the knife—"we are very fond of 'em." Thereupon the servant flourishingly removed the cover, revealing four bloaters of modest size.

We ate our bloaters in silence, as men intent upon serious work, and afterwards Irving told us a story. It was a long story, punctuated with many pauses. During its slow progress the servant stood by, waiting to remove the dish. Once he advanced his hands to it, but Irving, impatient of interruption, checked him. At last the story came to an end, or to a pause that was continuous, and the servant made a dash for the dish, took it away, and replaced it with another. The second dish was of greater dimensions than the first. Again Irving tapped the cover with his knife. "This," he said emphatically, "this is the supper. Excellent!" Off went the cover at a signal. "A goose," announced Irving ; "a goose—boiled." It was—a boiled goose. Simply a boiled goose, without seasoning or gravy.

In a comedy by the late Henry J. Byron, there is the character of a decayed tragedian who is made to lament the hardship of having to act the heavy and lugubrious part of "The Stranger" upon a steak-and-kidney pudding. I read my first sentimental drama upon a bloater and boiled goose. I can't, to-day, recollect a word of my play ; its plot and dialogue have completely faded from memory ; but I shall never forget the supper at which I submitted it—still less, the kindly, generous giver of the feast, and of some others, and more lavish ones, to follow in after years. Most appropriately, as it seems to me now, my little piece was called *Bygones*.

## MOTHER AND CHILD IN FAMINE STREET

I WONDER whether Jesus sees and hears.  
While, outside Famine Street, the Christmas board  
Sparkles and steams in honour of the Lord,  
The milk flows thin, my babe, and salt of tears :  
I wonder how the Birthday-feast appears  
To Him who in the Church is still adored  
By sound of organ—Him whose touch restored  
The shattered music of the stricken spheres.

*[The Baby suddenly drops its lips from the nipple,  
looks up, and smiles at a star shining through  
a hole in the garret roof.]*

Night's veil seems rent ! My baby greets a sight.  
What shining Shape is that he sees afar,  
There, through the broken tiles ?—No Christmas star !  
'Tis Christ who stands upon that azure height—  
'Tis Christ who weeps for Famine Street to-night :  
Oh, Christian London, say where Christians are !

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.



BY SOLOMON J. SOLOMON, A.R.A.



# THE MASTER'S MASTER

## *A SKETCH*

BY KATHERINE CECIL THURSTON

**I**T was within three days of Christmas, and all the county of Dorset was under snow. On the road that led from Yeovil in Somerset to the town of Dorchester it was banked under the hedges to a height of three feet, and the mid-road was barely traversable. Already, at half-past three in the day, there was a suggestion of evening in the black sky, heavy with the snow that had yet to fall, and in the ghostly hedgerows wrapped in their white blanket. As far as the eye could see there was only one vehicle on the long, shrouded roadway, and this in itself was a strange conveyance for the beginning of the twentieth century—the period of the railway and the motor-car; for it was a big barouche, a carriage such as my lord or my lady was wont to journey to town in, sixty—seventy—eighty years ago; and as it lumbered along, its great yellow wheels sinking in the snow-ruts, and the luggage upon its roof dusted with the first flakes of the fresh snowfall, it might almost have been a phantom coach, for no jingle of steel came from the harness, and even the horses' hoofs sounded muffled in the necessary slowness of the pace.

On the box seat the old coachman and the new footman shivered in unison. The former occupied himself conscientiously with his horses, though every two or three minutes a growl or a sigh escaped him, showing the condition of his mind; but the latter was all eyes, all ears, all curiosity. From time to time he stole a glance at his companion, then fell to blowing upon his fingers in a fruitless attempt to warm them.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

"Us should be in sight o' town now," he said at last, in a drawling, west country voice.

The coachman jerked his chin contemptuously. "Dorchester is a good three miles off. I ought to know."

"How many times has un covered this road?" The lad nodded backwards, indicating the barouche.

"Thirty! Thirty Christmases, come rain or snow! God forgive him!"

The boy's eyes widened. "Landlord said so at t' 'Crown,' but us didn't believe it."

"Past believing, isn't it?" The old man flicked one of the chestnut horses, and for a moment or so the pace increased; then, as the animals dropped back to their laboured trot, he turned in his seat and looked at the lad beside him. "He's stone!" he added suddenly. "He's not flesh and blood, he's stone! When I come to him this morn, and told him Jacob was took ill, what does he do, think you? Just looks up from his breakfast in the inn parlour and snaps out, 'Get another footman and leave him behind!' And Jacob with him thirteen year. God forgive him!"

The lad looked speculatively along the stretch of snowy road, overhung by black sky. "But why does un come here Christmas time?" he asked persistently.

"Why?" The old coachman drew a long breath. "I'll tell you. Because he's stone! Because he's the master—master of himself, master of us all. You might as well ask why he keeps his son, a man middle-aged, on five hundred pounds a year—won't allow his grandson to marry—and holds his granddaughters like misses in the schoolroom. Because he's master, and rides us all on the curb!"

"But why?" drawled the lad again. "If grandfather were like that to we, us wouldn't stand it—though us be only poor folk."

The old man laughed roughly. "Why?" he repeated. "I'll tell you! Because he has ninety thousand pounds to leave where

## THE MASTER'S MASTER

he likes—and he knows it. His son has waited fifty year for the money, and will wait another ten, they say. His grandson, a fine young lad of five-and-twenty, is in love these four year with a lady down in Devonshire, and hasn't a chance to marry. Oh, he rides 'em on the curb! Every year he threatens to make a will leaving all to charity; every Christmas he coaches down like this to the old place, and brings the will with him—drafted and ready, wanting but the name. Oh, he rides 'em!"

The boy's face was full of curiosity. "They do say at t' 'Crown' that un has silk pillows to un's head, and a fur coat, and hot water bottles to un's feet. Be it true?" He glanced half fearfully behind him.

"True enough! He minds himself! He has all things in life but some one to love him—and a master to master him. He sits behind us now, and he chuckles—he chuckles to think of us shivering out here—he chuckles to think of the horses ploughing through these roads—he chuckles to think of the family, waiting for him at the old place with welcome on their tongues and hate in their hearts. He chuckles; and, like as not, puts his hand into his pocket, where the will lies snug."

Silence succeeded the old man's tirade. The new footman pondered upon it in silence, while the horses fought their way gallantly through the packed snow. From time to time some small sign of animal life broke the white monotony of the cloaked country; a brown rabbit scudded across the road, or a bird, made bold by hunger, fluttered from the hedge and lighted on a branch within a couple of feet of the carriage window. But these breaks were rare; for the most part, whiteness and silence and blankness reigned, while the snowflakes dropped softly from the lowering sky.

A whole hour passed, and the two upon the box fell into dazed weariness; but still the horses ploughed their way forward, still the yellow wheels revolved, and still the occupant of the barouche remained inaudible and invisible in the warm, dark

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

comfort of the carriage. Then at last, like the star in the East to the waiting shepherds, the lights of the town broke upon the tired vision of the men; the coachman stiffened himself in his seat, and the lad beside him fell to blowing once more upon his fingers.

"Us will bait at t' 'King's Arms'?" he asked almost wistfully.

"Yes; I'll have fresh horses at the 'King's Arms,' though it's only eight miles on. I won't kill a willing beast for nobody." Again the old man's tone was angry, but now a certain defiance mingled with the anger. He had spoken to this stranger more freely than he had ever spoken to his companion of thirteen years, lying sick at Yeovil; and the effect of speech is strange. Revolt—slow in coming, slow in finding expression—was at work in his mind. For the first time in a long life of servitude, it occurred vividly to him that he was a slave—always had been a slave—to the tyrant in the barouche. He looked at the steaming horses; he looked at his own numbed hands; and a sudden rage moved him.

"Never no more!" he said, under his breath.

The new footman turned and stared at him. "What be you saying?" he asked.

But the old man made no answer.

On the outskirts of the town the roads were less heavy, and the jaded horses made a noble effort to increase their speed. The barouche entered Dorchester at a tolerable pace, and more than one inhabitant rose from his comfortable fire to see who it was that braved so inhospitable a day. In the long, narrow high street the windows were all lighted; and in the butchers' shops holly decorated the fare that awaited Christmas consumption. To the old coachman the glare seemed dazzling, after the hours in the blue-white light of the snow-covered country.

As they rolled up to the door of the old "King's Arms," he sat rigidly guiding his horses and nursing the rage in his soul; and as he pulled up before the inn, he drew his breath sharply between his teeth.

## THE MASTER'S MASTER

The horses halted obediently, shook their heads so that the harness rattled, and stretched their necks wearily. The new footman rose and stepped awkwardly to the ground; then, spurred by an inordinate curiosity, he turned at once to the door of the carriage. But the coachman leant suddenly from his seat, throwing the reins to one of the ostlers who had run forward from the yard.

"Stop!" he said. "I have to speak to the master!" He stood up stiffly, and with limbs numbed from cold, climbed down from the box and pushed the lad aside.

He went forward deliberately, turned the silver handle, and threw open the door of the barouche.

The light from the bow windows of the inn fell partially into the carriage, showing in a fitful way the roomy, well-cushioned interior, from which a peculiar, agreeable smell of costly leather came forth on the stinging air. The old man placed his foot on the step and thrust his head forward.

"Master!" he said harshly; then his hand went suddenly to his mouth, and he peered into the recesses of the carriage. "Master!" he said again; but this time his voice was faint—faint and frightened.

In the furthest corner of the great barouche, wrapped to the chin in furs, sat the figure of an old—a very old—man. But it was not age alone that held the beholder's gaze; it was something dreaded and awesome, something that made no count of years. The muscles of the body were relaxed; the chin had fallen forward on the chest; and the eyes and mouth gaped, as if still aghast at some unexpected summons.

The old coachman looked—looked—looked again; then backed incontinently from the barouche, and caught the boy's arm.

"Lad! Lad!" he said inarticulately. "Lad, he has found his master!"

## THE SIMPLE LIFE

*"And 'a babbled of green fields"*

—SHAKESPEARE-CUM-THEOBALD

WHEN the starlings dot the lawn,  
Cheerily we rise at dawn ;  
Cheerily, with blameless cup,  
Greet the wise world waking up ;—  
Ah, they little know of this,—  
They in Megalopolis !

Comes the long, still morning when  
Work we ply with book and pen ;  
Then the pure air in our lungs—  
Then "persuasion tips our tongues" ;  
*Then* we write,—as would, I wis,  
Men in Megalopolis !

Next, and not a stroke too soon,  
Phyllis spreads the meal of noon,  
Simple, frugal, strictly clean,  
Gastronomically mean ;—  
Appetite the *entrée* is  
Far from Megalopolis !

Salad in our garden grown,  
Beetroot, endive, all our own ;  
Bread,—we saw it baked, and how ;  
Milk and cream,—we know the cow ;  
Nothing here of "Force" or "Vis"  
As in Megalopolis !

## THE SIMPLE LIFE

After, surely, there should be,  
Somewhere, seats beneath a tree,  
Where we, twixt the curling rings,  
Dream of disregarded things ;  
Chiefly of what people miss,  
Drowsed in Megalopolis !

Then, before the sunlight wanes,  
Comes the stroll along the lanes ;  
Comes the rocking shallop tied  
By the reedy river side ;—  
Clearer waves the light keel kiss  
Than in Megalopolis !

So we speed the golden hours  
In this Hermitage of ours  
(*Hermits* we are not, believe !  
Every Adam has his Eve,  
Loved with a serener bliss  
Than in Megalopolis) ;—

So, until the shadows fall :  
Then Good Night say each and all ;  
Sleep secure from smoke and din,  
Quiet Conscience tucks us in ;  
Ah, they nothing know of *this*,—  
They of Megalopolis !

(*Thus URBANUS to his Wife*  
*Babbled of "The Simple Life" :*  
*Then—his glances unawares*  
*Lighting on a List of Shares—*  
*Gulping all his breakfast down,*  
*Hurried by the train to Town.*)

AUSTIN DOBSON.

# THE SPIRIT OF WORK

BY MARIE CORELLI

**A**T this momentous point of time, when the Old Year and the New are blending imperceptibly into that mystic web of human history called Past and Present, what says the dial of our destiny? On what figure in the round of man's life and progress does the rising sun of the Future shed its clearest and most commanding ray? Let us look up and see!—let us lift our eyes from our dreary self-absorption and miserable personal and petty cares,—let us read the shining numeral that marks our immediate national duty—Work! Work is the centre from which all the lines of a nation's power and prosperity radiate; and work is, with us, the burning topic of the day. Work that is urgently sought and demanded; work that needs doing; work waiting to be taken strenuously in hand; work that must and shall be done, or all the forces of God and Nature will demand why it is left *undone*! Before all rulers, priests, statesmen, and people in our Empire lies a vast field of labour—a field in which as yet so little of the soil has been tilled, and so scanty the grain which has been sown, that such harvest as may be gathered in is well-nigh profitless. Work is, to a certain extent, slowly going on, but the real “spirit” of work is almost, if not entirely, lacking. And success is impossible in any undertaking, unless one has all one's heart and soul in the means whereby success is attained. The simplest task has its result in something satisfactory, if performed by a cheerful and willing worker, while the most brilliant opportunities of high achievement are stultified and rendered *nil* by a laggard, reluctant, or prejudiced humour. The “spirit”



BY EDWIN A. ABBEY, R.A.



## THE SPIRIT OF WORK

of work must be centred *in* work before any work can be done worth doing.

There are certain persons of singular and altogether diseased mind who look upon work as a hardship scarcely to be borne. These are the outcasts of Nature. For if we faithfully study Nature, our divine Mother, we find that never for a single second does she know any cessation of toil. Forever and ever she patiently essays to teach us, her children, the secret of her beauty, her fruitfulness, her wisdom; and forever and ever we turn aside, striving in puny fashion to oppose ourselves to her immutable laws while creating impracticable ones of our own. She shows us that the loveliness of land and sea, the blossoming of trees and flowers, the plumage of birds and butterflies, the formation of precious gems in the rocks and among the shells of the ocean, are all the result of Work. The diamond is the brilliant effect of patient conformation to the necessary elements of its composition in the mine. The pearl is merely the proof of laborious effort on the part of a poor bivalve to mend a wound in its shell. When with the coming spring we see the first dainty aconites breaking the dark ground into gold, we know they have been "working" their way through the earth determinedly, moved by the divine instinct and desire of light. Strange it is that we cannot at least do our work as well as these simple organisms which passively obey the Divine Command! We judge ourselves "superior" to them; but in that we cannot or will not do our "work" so well, we are inferior. We have less patience than the diamond; less adaptability than the oyster; less courage than the aconite. The particular kind of work which we perhaps find ready to our hand to do, does not suit our "convenience." We are too "great" for anything that savours of the "menial." The duties to which honour, conscience, and self-respect bind us are "narrow" or "monotonous." We want to be something we are not, and for which we were never intended to be; and like the fabled frog who

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sought to become a bull, we burst ourselves with an inflated idea of our own value. The famous Quentin Matsys was a blacksmith. But he did not scorn the blacksmith's trade or the blacksmith's shop: he raised the smithy work to the height of his own creative genius, as is testified to this day by his exquisitely fashioned iron fountain in the Cathedral Square of Antwerp. Benvenuto Cellini was a metal worker, and his "trade" was his joy. He was content to stick to his trade; and to design such marvels of work *in* his trade, that his name has come down to us in our generation as one of the few among the masters of art in the world.

In Great Britain there is, most unfortunately, a certain "class" contempt for "trades." The worker in any one of them is hampered on all sides; and his individuality, if he happens to possess any, is too frequently condemned and repressed. The man who is occupied in a trade is called a "common" man. Many folks among us are a great deal too fond of this word "common." They use it on all occasions, in and out of season—depreciatively, or contemptuously. They have a fastidious abhorrence for "common" things. They dislike the "common" people. The brave soul who has climbed inch by inch up the ladder of prosperity, beginning at the very lowest rung and arriving successfully at the top, receives but a grudging meed of praise—"he comes of 'common' family"—he is quite a "common" person! This expression "common" is a favourite one with the sort of people who are found languishing idly among the "hangers-on" of "county" magnates, striving to claim kinship (through some pre-Adamite "family connection") with a lord, or a duke, or some such human toy of material circumstance; and preferring to pass their time generally in disseminating stupid scandal and mischievous gossip, rather than mix with "common" everyday honest men and women who have work to do in the world, and who honestly do it. Among them are most of the toadies, time-servers, and hypocrites of the community; creatures who crawl

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before a trumpery "title" as abjectly as a beaten cur trails its body along in the dust under the whip of its master, and who have neither the courage nor the perception to see that there is nothing in God's universe that we dare call "common." Every smallest particle of creation, from a star to a dewdrop, is designed to be perfect in itself, and individually adapted to individual uses. We may not rightly call any man, woman, or child "common," except in so far as they belong to our "common" humanity, and share with us the joys of the "common" sunshine, the "common" fresh air, the privilege of a "common" grave, and the right of a "common" faith in God. And the "common" man who has *worked*, and through work alone has performed the un-"common" feat of raising himself from the low to the high, is far more to be admired and respected than he who, born to the heritage of millions, trifles away his time in idle squandering and foolish dissipation. Nature marks this latter class of wealthy "loafers" so that we may know them. Their banking-accounts may be written in raised letters of gold, but on their faces we read in unmistakable characters what may be called a "Public Warning." The man who himself works for his own, is a much healthier type of humanity than the man who merely takes what others have made for him.

There is no degradation in any sort of work. The field-labourer turning the heavy clods of earth, in preparation for the sowing of grain, is every whit as noble as the student who, by patient research, prepares the way for a harvest of fresh scientific discovery, always providing that the true "spirit" of work is in both men. For the "spirit" of work is the love of work; it is the bending of all one's energies, for love's sake, upon the particular task we have in hand. With love all things are easy; without love, the smallest duty becomes burdensome. There is no reason why another Benvenuto Cellini should not arise in the metal trade, no cause why another Michael Angelo should not paint ceilings in fresco. We are frequently shamed, not so much by the enterprise of other nations, as by our own

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idleness and inefficiency. We make a great clamour about "gentility"—a form of snobbishness more prevalent in the British Islands than anywhere else. Many a working-man's wife would rather place her sons as clerks in city offices than apprentice them to a useful trade, because she foolishly imagines clerks are "gentlemen," forgetting that "gentlemen" are not made by position, but by conduct. Every so-called "gentleman" in the land would be much the better for learning some trade before considering his education completed. No trade is, of itself, contemptible—each branch offers its own chances of new discovery and higher development, depending on the invention, ambition, energy, and resource of those employed in it. Thought and perseverance in a worker are bound to raise whatever work he or she is employed in to an art. Personally speaking, I am bound to say that I have never found any one who is really clever, trustworthy, and persevering, in any trade or profession, among the "Unemployed." The real lovers of work seem always to have enough, and more than enough, work to do. I endorse every word recently written by a clever American writer who, discussing the "Unemployed," and the men who declare they have "no chance nowadays," says: "I do not believe that life is more difficult than it used to be. To-day, perhaps, you may have to know French, shorthand, or typewriting among the means of livelihood. But to learn them all does not require a greater sacrifice of brain-power than was required of our grandfathers to learn reading and writing. They often had to walk six miles there and six miles back from a school, and when they had learnt an accomplishment the 'competition' was 'fearful.' At the bottom of much of this modern outcry of the terrible difficulties of life nowadays, there appears to me to be a good deal of self-conceit, when the cry is raised by a successful man, and of self-excuse when the cry is used by an unsuccessful man. The former likes to impress upon you that he has done something heroic; the latter that he has failed simply because nobody could have succeeded."

## THE SPIRIT OF WORK

"The world seems overstocked with everything," a gloomy-minded man remarked to Lord Palmerston. "I can tell you some things that the world has never enough of," replied Palmerston, "and that it is always willing to pay for. Intelligence, honesty, courage, and perseverance. In these the supply will never exceed the demand."

Intelligence, honesty, courage, and perseverance are never found in the worker who does not truly love his work. Love brings all the virtues in its train. Love means earnest concentration on the thing beloved. Goethe's inspiring lines should animate the mind and brace the energies of every worker :—

"Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute,  
Whatever you can do, or dream you can—begin it;  
Boldness has genius, power, magic in it;  
Only engage,—and then the mind grows heated;  
Begin!—and then the work will be completed."

Nature never knows "short hours." She works at midnight as steadily as she does at mid-day. In the very sleep of her manifold creatures she has designed a working remedial system by which the wear and tear of brain and body shall be repaired. I doubt if any living organism in the whole vast Cosmos ever seeks a holiday save Man. I have often marvelled that so sagacious a person as "St. Lubbock," now Lord Avebury, should have instituted "Bank Holidays" for men, seeing that he has studied the habits and customs of bees. When we complain of working "over time," we are really proclaiming ourselves as inferior to the ants and beetles. When we indulge ourselves in idleness and "loafing," we are doing something diametrically opposed to all the laws of the universe. What wonder then if the secret forces of that universe—forces whose vast movements we only as yet dimly realise—should cast us out among the unfit and "Unemployed"? In the bird-world, if one of the feathered community refuses to work for its own living, it is quickly despatched, as an abnormal and diseased

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creature. And there is not the slightest doubt that voluntary idleness is nothing less than a morbid growth in the mind, as devastating as a cancer in the body. Nowadays we find scores of people bent on "amusing" themselves. "How are you going to 'amuse' yourself?" is a daily question, or "What shall we do to kill time and 'amuse' ourselves?" Nobody seems to grasp the fact that in Work, and work alone, is the source of both "amusement" and happiness, as well as of prosperity and power. As for "killing time," that is a criminal act. For every moment is precious to those who know how to use it honestly. By-and-by *our* little clocks in this world must stop, and we shall be spared no more of the golden minutes, laden with blessing, opportunity, and love, which, while we live, are given to us freely from the treasuries of God. To "kill" one of them is to murder a living thing.

Certain it is, however, that "amusement," or what is called by that name, is the fetish of the hour. The wealthy classes of our day set a most mischievous example of time-wasting to the rest of the community, and until they cease to create scandal by their extravagance, licentiousness, sensualism, and luxury, so long will there be discontent and disorder among what we are pleased to call the "lower" majority of the people. If the rich man passes his time in shooting tame partridges and pheasants, the poor man sees no reason why he should not equally pass his time in playing football. He, too, will be "amused" in his way. And supposing football does not appeal to him, he will seek "amusement" in the public-house, getting drunk on the "doctored" beer provided for him by prosperous brewers, of whom some are in Parliament, and some, with the most sublime hypocrisy, profess to support the "temperance" cause. Honest interest in honest work, and the State encouragement of ambition in honest workers, would serve "temperance" better than a million sermons. Government prizes given for specimens of superlative work done by British workmen in British trades would at least show that statesmen

## THE WATERSHED

thought of something more than their own positions in the House, "tea on the Terrace," and Bridge, which three things at present would often appear to occupy them, to the forgetfulness of more pressing matters. Aspiration, research, discovery, and invention should be "officially" encouraged and recognised in every trade and profession—not checked, repressed, or "sneered down." For work is not only the making but the preservation of an Empire, and all those engaged in work merit first consideration from an Empire's rulers.

A Worker is always a dignified figure. He is the nearest approach to all that we may reverently conceive or guess of God. The Divine Source of Creation must be an ever-working Power. There can be no cessation, no rest from toil, for that prolific Intelligence which creates by a thought and sustains with a breath. Work must needs bring us into unison with Him who hath made us. And if we work faithfully, in the true "spirit" of work, we shall come closer to the Infinite Life of all things, and shall understand, perchance, the deepest, purest meaning and higher intention of our own existence in this world, from which, when our work here is finished, we shall pass to a higher sphere of Labour and a fuller fruition of Love.

## THE WATERSHED

*(Lines written between Munich and Verona)*

**B**LACK mountains pricked with pointed pine  
A melancholy sky.  
Out-distanced was the German vine,  
The sterile fields lay high.  
From swarthy Alps I travelled forth  
Aloft; it was the North, the North;  
Bound for the Noon was I.

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

I seemed to breast the streams that day ;

I met, opposed, withstood

The Northward rivers on their way,

My heart against the flood—

My heart that pressed to rise and reach,

And felt the love of altering speech,

Of frontiers, in its blood.

But oh, the unfolding South ! the burst

Of Summer ! Oh to see

Of all the Southward brooks the first !

The travelling heart went free

With endless streams ; that strife was stopped ;

And down a thousand vales I dropped,

I flowed to Italy.

ALICE MEYNELL.

## THE OPEN DOOR

### A DUOLOGUE

BY ALFRED SUTRO

SCENE.—*The drawing-room of LORD TORMINSTER's cottage by the sea. It is 2 A.M. of a fine July night ; the French windows are open on to the lawn. The room is dark ; in an armchair SIR GEOFFREY TRANSOM, a man of forty, with a frank, pleasant face, is seated, deep in thought. Suddenly the door opens, and LADY TORMINSTER appears and switches on the light. She starts at seeing SIR GEOFFREY.*

LADY T. Oh !

SIR G. (*rising*). Hullo ! Don't be afraid—it's only I !

LADY T. What a start you gave me ! Why haven't you gone to bed ?



A QUIET PIPER

BY LINLEY SAMBOURNE



## THE OPEN DOOR

SIR G. I'm tired of going to bed. One always has to get up again, and it becomes monotonous. Why haven't you gone to sleep?

LADY T. I don't know—it's too hot, or something. I've come for a book.

SIR G. Let me choose one for you. [*He goes to the table.*]

LADY T. Why were you sitting in the dark?

SIR G. Because the light annoyed me. What sort of book will you have? A red one or a green one?

LADY T. Is there a virtue in the colour of the binding?

SIR G. Why not? They're all the same inside. There are three hundred ways, they say, of cooking a potato—there are as many of dressing up a lie, and calling it a novel. But it's always the same old lie. Here, take this (*he hands her a book*). Popular Astronomy. That will send you to sleep.

LADY T. The stars frighten me. But I'll try it. Good-night.

SIR G. Good-night.

LADY T. And you really had better go to bed.

SIR G. I move as an amendment that you sit down and talk.

LADY T. At this time of night!

SIR G. Why not? It's day in the Antipodes.

LADY T. And in this attire! [*She glances at her peignoir.*]

SIR G. Pooh! You are more dressed than you were at dinner. That's awfully rude, isn't it? But then, you see, you're not my hostess now—you're a spirit walking in the night. One can't be polite to spirits. Sit down, oh shade, and let us converse.

LADY T. (*hesitating*). I don't know——

SIR G. The household have all retired; and we will make this concession to Mrs. Grundy—we will leave the door open. There! (*He flings it open.*) The Open Door! Centuries ago, when I was alive, I remember paragraphs with that heading.

LADY T. (*laughing*). So you're not alive now?

SIR G. Sir Geoffrey Transom ceased to be when he said good-night to Lady Torminster. Sir Geoffrey is upstairs, asleep. So is her ladyship. We are their souls. Let us talk.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

LADY T. You are in your whimsical mood.

SIR G. And you in your wrapper—peignoir—tea-gown—it don't matter what you call it. You look—jolly. Ridiculous word—I don't mean that at all. You look—you. More you than I've seen you for years. Sh—don't interrupt. Shades never do that. By the way, do you know that the old lumber-room, my owner—my corporeal sheath—means to go away in the morning, before you are up?

LADY T. Sir Geoffrey! What nonsense! You've promised to stay a month!

SIR G. I assure you I have been charged to invent fitting and appropriate lies to account for the ridiculous creature's abrupt departure. The man Transom is a poor liar.

LADY T. You are making me giddy. Would you mind putting on your body? I've not been introduced to your soul.

SIR G. (*springing up, with a flourish*). How very remiss of me! Permit me. Gertrude, this is Geoffrey. You have often heard me speak of him.

LADY T. (*rising*). I think I'll go to bed.

SIR G. Now that is preposterous. Jack, my dear old friend—the best and only friend I have in the world—is slumbering peacefully upstairs, and Jack's wife is reluctant to talk to Jack's old pal because the sun happens to be hidden the other side of the globe. Lady Torminster, sit down. If you're good you shall have a cigarette.

LADY T. (*sitting*). Well, just one. And when I've finished it, I'll go.

SIR G. Agreed.

[*He hands her the box; she takes a cigarette. He strikes a match and holds it for her. He then takes a cigarette himself, and lights it.*]

SIR G. And, while smoking it, remember Penelope's web. For I've heaps of things to tell you.

LADY T. They'll keep till to-morrow.

## THE OPEN DOOR

SIR G. That's a fearful delusion. Nothing keeps. There is one law in the universe: NOW.

LADY T. I want to know what you mean by this nonsense about your going.

SIR G. (*puffing out smoke*). Yes—I'm off in the morning. It has occurred to me that I haven't been to China. Now that is a serious omission. How can I face my forefathers, and confess to them that I haven't seen the land where the Yellow Labour comes from?

LADY T. China has waited a long time—a month more or less will make no difference. They are a patient race.

SIR G. There is gipsy blood in my veins—I must wander—I'm restless. . . . Not like Jack—he's untroubled—he can sleep. Jack's a fine sleeper, isn't he?

LADY T. Yes.

SIR G. Calm, serene, untroubled, with the conscience of a babe—one, two, three, he sleeps. He and I have had some rare times together. I've been roped to him on the Andes—he shot a tiger that was about to scrunch me—I rubbed his nose when it was frost-bitten. He saved my life—I saved his nose. I always maintain that the balance of gratitude is on his side—for where would he have been without his nose?

LADY T. You *are* absurd.

SIR G. Would you have married him without a nose?

LADY T. I might have.

SIR G. Now you know you wouldn't. You'd have been afraid of what people would say. And what would he have done when he became shortsighted, and had to wear glasses?

LADY T. My cigarette has gone out.

SIR G. (*jumping up, and handing her the box*). Take another. Never re-light a cigarette—it's like dragging up the past. Here.

LADY T. I said only one.

SIR G. This is not the hour for inflexibility. The Medes and Persians have all gone to bed.

[*She takes the cigarette. He lights it for her.*]

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

LADY T. Tell me why you mean to leave us. And remember—I shan't let *this* one go out.

SIR G. My explanation will be handed to you with your cup of tea in the morning.

LADY T. And you will be gone?

SIR G. I shall be gone. There is a train at 7.45—which will be packed with husbands. I shall breakfast in town.

LADY T. Why?

SIR G. Well, one must breakfast somewhere. It's a convention.

LADY T. Sir Geoffrey, I want you to tell me what this means.

SIR G. Give your decision, said the judge to the arbitrator, but never your reasons. I go, because I go. Besides, has one reasons? Why do people die, or get married, or buy umbrellas? Because of typhoid, love, or the rain? Not at all. Isn't that so?

LADY T. I wish you'd be serious.

SIR G. I'm fearfully serious. When Jack shot that tiger he had to go so near the brute that he held his life in his hands. Do you know what was my chief impression as I lay there, with the ugly cat's paw upon my chest, beginning to rip me?

LADY T. (*shuddering*). Horrible! What?

SIR G. I resented his having eaten something that smelt like onions.

LADY T. (*smiling*). A tiger!

SIR G. Onions may have been his undoing. That's the beggar's skin on the floor. But you should have seen me rub Jack's nose!

LADY T. (*warningly*). Sir Geoffrey, there's very little cigarette left——

SIR G. There are lots more in the box—and dawn is a long way off. Hang it, Lady Torminster, don't be in a hurry! Do you hear the sea out there? It's breathing as regularly as old Jack. And don't you think this is fine? Here we are, we two, meeting just as we shall meet, on the other side of the Never-Never Land. It's a chance for a man to speak to a woman, and tell things.

## THE OPEN DOOR

LADY T. What things?

SIR G. That's just it—what things? What have I to say, after all? I am going to-morrow because I am a fantastic, capricious ass. Also because I'm lonely.

LADY T. How will China help you?

SIR G. They colour it green on the map—and there *is* such a lot of it!

LADY T. You should get married.

SIR G. (*with a sudden burst of passion*). You say that—you!

[*He starts back, ashamed, and hangs his head.* LADY TORMINSTER *throws a quick glance at him, then looks ahead of her, puffing quietly at her cigarette.*

LADY T. (*quietly*). So that is why you are going?

SIR G. (*with a great sigh of relief*). Now, that really is fine of you! Every other woman in the world would have seized that chance for a melodramatic exit. "Good-night, Sir Geoffrey; I must go back to my husband." "Good-night, Lady Torminster." A clasp of the hand—a hot tear—mine—on your wrist. But you sit there. Splendid!

LADY T. I ask you again—is that truly why you are going?

SIR G. Well, yes, that's the fact. I apologise humbly—it's so conventional. Isn't it?

LADY T. I suppose it's difficult for human beings to invent new situations.

SIR G. You've known it, of course, all the time; you've known it ever since Jack brought me to you, the day after you were engaged. And that's nine years ago. It's the usual kind of fatality.

LADY T. These things happen.

SIR G. Yes. Well, I thought I was cured. I've been here five days, and I find I am not. So I go. That's best, isn't it?

LADY T. Yes.

SIR G. It's so infernally stupid. You're a beautiful woman, of course; but there are heaps of beautiful women. You've qualities

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

—well, so have other women, too. I'm only forty-one—and, as you say, why don't I marry? Simply because of you. Because you've an uncomfortable knack of intruding between me and the other lady.

LADY T. That is a great misfortune.

SIR G. It's most annoying. So I shall try China. I shall come back in two years—I shall be forty-three then—I shall come back, sound as a bell; and I shall marry some healthy, pink-cheeked young woman, take a house next to yours, and in the fulness of time your eldest son shall fall in love with my daughter.

LADY T. Why not?

SIR G. I shouldn't have told, of course; but I'm glad that I have. It clears the air. Now, what excuse shall I make?

LADY T. A wire from town?

SIR G. Jack knows all about my affairs; in fact, that's why I take the early train, to avoid his questions.

LADY T. You find it impossible to stay out your time here?

SIR G. Quite. There are moments when I am unpleasantly volcanic.

LADY T. Then I tell you the best thing to do. Don't take your trunks; just go up with a bag. Leave a note that you'll come back on Tuesday. Then write from town and say you're prevented.

SIR G. That's a good idea—yes, that's much better.

LADY T. And, if you find that you really cannot come back——

SIR G. Exactly; you'll forward my goods and chattels. And old Jack will ascribe it all to my wayward mood; he'll think I have found it too dull down here. I'm immensely obliged.

LADY T. (*with a smile*). Remark that I've not offered to be a sister to you.

SIR G. You've been superb. Oh, the good talk we've had! Do you know, I could almost wish old Jack to have heard what I said. I'm so fond of him, that grand old fellow, that I've been on

## THE OPEN DOOR

the point of telling him, myself, more than once. For you know how he *will* have me take you about, and it's painful. Besides, I've felt it almost disloyal to—keep this thing from him. You understand, don't you?

LADY T. Yes.

SIR G. He and I almost are one, you see. It's not British to show any feeling, but really I—love him. And the devil comes along, and, of all the women in the world, singles out Jack's wife, and fills my heart with her. That's the devil's sense of humour.

LADY T. Perhaps he has read Bernard Shaw. But you must never let Jack know—never.

SIR G. I suppose not. He's so direct, so single-minded, that the shock would be terrible. But I'm not to blame. How could I help it? Oh, all that cackle about being the master of one's fate!

LADY T. Two years in China——

SIR G. We'll hope so. Of course, it didn't matter about my telling you, because you knew already.

LADY T. (*nodding*). Yes, I knew. Although——

SIR G. Oh, you've done what you could! I've felt, in a hundred subtle ways, how you almost implored me—not to. Well, there it is. I'll write that note at once.

[*He sits at the table and begins to write.*]

LADY T. I'm sorry you are so lonely.

SIR G. That's my fault, too—the fault of the ridiculous class to which we belong. I don't do anything.

LADY T. Why not?

SIR G. What would you have me do? Go into the House? Thank you, I've been there. You spend your time on the Terrace or in the smoke-room till a muffin-bell rings; then you gravely walk into the lobby, where an energetic gentleman counts you as Polyphemus counted his sheep. Philanthropy! Well, I've tried that, but it's not in my line. I'm quite a respectable landlord, but a fellow can't live all by himself in a great Elizabethan barrack.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

Town—the Season ? Christian mothers invite you to inspect their daughters' shoulders, with a view to purchase. I'm tired of golf and polo ; I'm tired of bridge. So I'll try the good sea and the open plains : sleep in a tent and watch the stars twinkle—the stars that make you afraid.

LADY T. Yes, I'm afraid of the stars.

SIR G. Why ?

LADY T. You remember the Persian poet ? " I too have said to the stars and the wind, I will. But the wind and the stars have mocked me—they have laughed in my face. . . . "

SIR G. (*a little uncomfortably*). Persian poets, like all poets, have a funny way of pretending that the stars take an interest in us. To me, it's their chief charm that they're so unconcerned. They are lonely, too.

LADY T. (*suddenly, violently*). Don't say that again—don't—I can't bear it !

SIR G. (*aghast*). Gertrude ! ! !

LADY T. (*in a whisper*). Yes . . .

[*He stares haggardly at her ; she does not move, but looks out, through the open window, into the night.*]

SIR G. (*with a deep breath*). Well, I suppose we had better turn in——

LADY T. When do you go to China ?

SIR G. I shall take the first boat.

LADY T. And you will come back—— ?

SIR G. In a year—or two—or three——

LADY T. We shall hear from you ?

SIR G. (*with an effort at lightness*). Certainly. And I will send you chests of tea—best family Souchong—and jars of ginger. Also little boxes that fit into each other. I am afraid that is all I know at present of Chinese manufactures.

LADY T. (*musings*). You will be away so long ?

SIR G. You told me to do something. I shall learn Chinese. I believe there are five hundred letters in the alphabet.

## THE OPEN DOOR

LADY T. As many as that ?

SIR G. It is possible that I exaggerate. Well, Lady Torminster, I think I'll say good-night.

*[He offers his hand, which she ignores. She smiles, and motions him back to his seat.]*

LADY T. The sun is still shining in the Antipodes, my dear Geoffrey, and you are still Jack's old friend, talking to Jack's wife. Sit down, and don't be foolish. You'll be away for years ; it's possible we may never meet again. It's possible, too, that next time we do meet you may be married.

SIR G. *(with iron control)*. Who knows ?

LADY T. Exactly—who knows ? So there's really no reason why we shouldn't look each other squarely in the face for once, and speak out what's in us.

SIR G. *(sorrowfully)*. Oh, Lady Torminster, what is there to say ?

LADY T. *(bending forward a little and smiling)*. How you resent my having told you !

SIR G. *(with a guilty start)*. Resent ! I !

LADY T. You do, and you know it. In your heart you are saying, "All was going so well—she has spoiled it ! If she *does* love me she shouldn't have said it—Jack's wife !"

SIR G. *(sturdily)*. Well—Jack's wife. Yes !

LADY T. Geoffrey, Jack bores me.

SIR G. *(aghast)*. Lady Torminster !

LADY T. *(clapping her hands in glee)*. There ! I've said it ! Oh, it's such a relief ! I never have before, and I don't suppose I ever shall again—for whom can I say it to but you ? Listen—I'll tell you—quite *entre nous*—he bores me shockingly !

SIR G. *(in positive distress)*. Lady Torminster ! I beg of you !

LADY T. *(cheerfully)*. The best fellow in all the world, and he bores me. A heart of gold, a model husband, a perfect father—and a bore, bore, bore ! There ! I assure you I feel better.

SIR G. I suppose there are moments when every woman says that of every man.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

LADY T. (*fanning herself*). My dear Geoffrey, please send for your soul; it has wandered off somewhere, and I don't like talking to copybooks.

SIR G. (*doggedly*). You are talking to Jack's friend.

LADY T. Jack's friend—and mine—don't forget that! And could I say these things about Jack to any one else, and can't you conceive what a joy it is to say them? Besides, aren't we just now on the rim of the world—aren't we a little more than ourselves—aren't we almost on the other side of things? If we ever meet again, we shall look curiously at each other, and wonder, was it all true? As it is, I am scarcely sure that you are real. Everything is so still, so strange. Jack! He is up there, of course, the dear boy, his big, red face pressed on the pillow. Oh, Geoffrey, when Jack brought you to me, and I was engaged—if you only hadn't been so loyal!

SIR G. (*grimly*). Do you know what you are saying?

LADY T. I am saying the things a woman says once in a lifetime, and feels all her life. Oh, it was all so simple! You loved me—I knew that you loved me—you . . . were blind because of Jack. . . . And I married Jack . . . I mustn't complain. . . . I am one of the hundred million women who marry—Jacks.

SIR G. A better, finer man never lived.

LADY T. I dare say—in fact, I am sure. But you should see us when we are alone, sitting there night after night, with never a word to say to each other! You tell me you're tired of polo, and golf, and bridge. Well, how about me? And need you be scowling so fiercely, and begrudge me my one little wail, you who are going away?

SIR G. (*angrily*). Yes, I am going away, and I shall marry a Chinese. I shall marry the first Chinese woman I meet.

LADY T. This is very sudden. Why?

SIR G. Because, at least, not knowing the language, she won't be able to say unkind things about me to my friends.

## THE OPEN DOOR

LADY T. (*her chin on her hand, looking squarely at him*). Geoffrey, is Jack a bore?

SIR G. He never bores me.

LADY T. That's because he shot your tiger, and you rubbed his nose. Besides, you talk about horses, and so on. And yet I heard him, for a solid hour, telling you about a rubber he lost at bridge through his partner making diamonds trumps when he should have made spades.

SIR G. He's not clever, of course—and you are. But still! Is cleverness everything?

LADY T. Haven't I told you he's the very best fellow in all the world? And do you think I'm posing, pretending that I'm misunderstood, and the rest? You know me better. I am indulging, for once, in the luxury of absolute candour.

SIR G. You loved him——

LADY T. Of course I loved him—and I love him now.

SIR G. (*triumphantly*). You see!

LADY T. If we women had had a hand in the making of the language, how many words there would be to express our feelings towards the men we are fond of! Of course I love Jack. I'm cruel to him sometimes; and there comes a look into his eyes—he has dog's eyes, you know—a faithful Newfoundland——

SIR G. (*very earnestly*). I don't think women quite realise what friendship means to a man.

LADY T. I am certain that men don't realise what marriage means to a woman! Dear funeral, am I not a good wife—shall I not remain a good wife, till the end of the chapter? Because there isn't only Jack—there are Jack's children.

SIR G. Yes.

LADY T. And isn't it wonderful, when you think of it—here are we two, Jack's friend and his wife, alone on a desert island—and we have confessed our love for each other, and we are able to discuss it as calmly as though it were rheumatism!

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

SIR G. (*with a groan*). If only I hadn't induced you to stay !

LADY T. (*smiling*). My dear friend, you didn't !

SIR G. (*amazed*). I didn't !

LADY T. Why no—of course not. I knew you were going to-morrow.

SIR G. How ?

LADY T. Oh, never mind how ! I knew. And I suspected you would be sitting up here to-night. So I came down, hoping to find you. I wanted this talk with you. And I extracted your confession—as though it had been a tooth.

SIR G. And why ?

LADY T. Why ? Because it will be something to think of, in the dull days ahead. Because I knew that you loved me, and wanted to be told. Because your life lies ahead of you, and mine is ended. Because I love you, and insisted that you should know. You leave me now, and I have no illusions. Paolo and Francesca are merely a poet's dream. You will marry—of course you will marry—but this moment, at least, has been mine.

SIR G. (*stretching out yearning hands*). This moment, and every moment, in past and future !

LADY T. Ah, the future ! Strange little syllables that hide so much ! I can see you, introducing your wife to me, a little shyly—I can see myself, shaking hands with her—and with you. . . . My boy is seven already—time travels fast. . . . But it's good to know that you really have loved me, all these years. . . .

SIR G. By day and by night—you, and only you !

LADY T. And I have loved you—ah yes, I have loved you ! . . . And, having said this to each other, we will not meet again—till you bring me your wife.

SIR G. Ah—then !

LADY T. I have loved you, and I love you, for the fine, upright, loyal creature that you are. I love you for loving Jack ; and it is

## THE OPEN DOOR

Jack's great quality in my eyes that he has been able to inspire such love. And, my dear friend, let us not be ashamed, we two, but only very proud, and very happy. We shall go our ways, and do our duty ; but we shall never forget this talk we have had to-night.

SIR G. (*gently*). I am beginning to understand . . .

LADY T. You will be less lonely in future . . . and I no longer afraid of the stars. . . . Brave heart—oh, brave little heart that I for a moment have held in my hands!

SIR G. (*with a passionate movement towards her*). Gertrude!

LADY T. (*lifting a finger*). No—stay where you are. . . . Those are the first rays of dawn—I must go. . . . Good-bye. We have no need to shake hands, you and I. . . . Ah, Geoffrey—good-bye!

[*She goes swiftly, and closes the door. He bends his head, and remains standing, motionless, by the table.*]

CURTAIN.

# IN SMYRNA

SKETCH FOR PIANOFORTE SOLO

EDWARD ELGAR.

*Quasi Andante. (♩ = 72.)*

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Quasi Andante' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The score includes various dynamics such as *ppp* (pianississimo), *p* (piano), *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *ppp* again. It also features markings for pedaling ('Ped.') and specific performance instructions like 'con Ped.', 'foco marcato.', 'largamente.', 'rit. e dim.', 'a tempo.', and 'dim. molto.'. The score is divided into sections for the Right Hand (R.H.) and Left Hand (L.H.). The first system shows a tremolo in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The second system features a crescendo in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The third system is marked 'largamente' and features a steady bass line in the left hand and a steady right hand. The fourth system is marked 'rit. e dim.' and features a steady bass line in the left hand and a steady right hand. The fifth system is marked 'dim. molto.' and features a steady bass line in the left hand and a steady right hand. The score is marked with asterisks (\*) and 'Ped.' at various points, indicating where to pedal and where to change the tempo or dynamics.

*ppp (trem.)*  
*con Ped.* *p* *foco marcato.* *3*

*cres.* *p* *pp* *f* *3* *Ped.* \*

*cres.* *mf* *f* *3* *Ped.* \* *largamente.* *L.H.* *R.H.* *Ped.* \* *Ped.* \*

*rit. e dim.* *a tempo.* *R.H.* *p* *ppp* *L.H.* *Ped.* \* *Ped.* \* *Ped.* \*

*dim. molto.* *3* *3*

# IN SMYRNA

The musical score is written for piano and strings, featuring a variety of dynamics and tempo changes. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4.

**First System:** The piano part begins with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic. The string part follows with a *Ped.* (pedal) marking.

**Second System:** The piano part includes markings for *stringendo.*, *rit.*, and *stringendo.*. The piano part starts with *ppp espress. e mesto.* (pianississimo, expressive and mournful), followed by *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano).

**Third System:** The piano part includes markings for *rit.*, *a tempo.*, and *p dolce.* (piano dolce). The piano part starts with *mf* (mezzo-forte) and includes a *tr* (trill) marking.

**Fourth System:** The piano part includes markings for *mf* (mezzo-forte), *tr* (trill), *dim. molto.* (diminuendo molto), and *accel.* (accelerando).

**Fifth System:** The piano part includes markings for *pp rit.* (pianissimo, ritardando), *accel.* (accelerando), *rit.* (ritardando), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *sf* (sforzando).

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

*3* *a tempo. più lento.*

*dim.* *tr* *p* *rit.* *pp* *pp*

*Tempo lmo.*  
*Cantabile.*

*3* *cres.*

*con Ped.*

*3* *f*

*largamente.* *grandioso.*

*sf* *ff*

*Ped. V* *\* Ped.* *\**

*dim.* *p* *dim. molto.*

*Ped. V* *\* Ped. V* *\** *Ped.* *\* Ped.* *\** *Ped.* *\**

# IN SMYRNA

*ad lib.*  
*cres.*  
*8va*  
*f acci.*  
*sf*  
*8va*  
*ppp subito.*  
*loco.*  
*ten.*  
*poco cres.*  
*sf*  
*dim. molto.*  
*ten.*  
*a tempo. più lento.*  
*rit.*  
*pp*  
*molto espress.*  
*con Ped. ppp.*  
*molto rit.*  
*dim.*  
*FINE.*  
*Ped.*

Smyrna, Oct. 1905.

# A BALLAD OF LONG AGO

## THE TRYST

### I

A MAIDEN sat waiting beside a stream,  
A lark sung high in the air,  
It was several hundred years ago,  
And the maiden was passing fair,  
With her noble mien and tender eyes,  
And her curious old-world air,  
Dear heart !  
And her curious old-world air.  
The lark ! the lark ! how he sings !  
And his song is all of love,  
While the breeze from the woodland the same tale brings  
From the blackbird and thrush and dove.

### II

In sunshine and shade, in gloom and in gleam,  
The rivulet took its way ;  
The maiden sat wrapped in a strange day-dream  
In the calm of the summer's day ;  
But the tryst seemed long, as all trysts seem,  
And why did her lover delay ?  
Dear heart !  
And why did her lover delay ?  
By lonely ways must he come,  
There is danger enough to dread,  
For his foes lie hid in the forest gloom,  
And the timid deer have fled.



PRISCILLA

BY BERNARD PARTRIDGE



# A BALLAD OF LONG AGO

## III

The day went down, and they tell it aloud,  
O horrible was the deed !  
And the maiden's glossy head was bowed,  
When they brought the riderless steed ;  
And she thought of where the stream runs deep,  
In her terrible, tearless need—

Poor heart !

In her terrible, tearless need.

And both are gone, was the song  
Which the lark poured forth in trills ;  
And the murmuring brook, as it wound along,  
Told the tale to the list'ning hills.

SARAH GRAND.

# THE VENDETTA

BY W. PETT RIDGE

I'D go myself," said the mother, "only that it would mean putting on my outdoor boots. But I think I can trust you, Muriel."

"I'll make their hair curl," declared Muriel with relish. "I'll talk to them like a Dutch uncle. I'll make 'em stare with both eyes. I won't let 'em get in a word edgeways."

"That's right."

"I shall begin talking the moment the door's opened, and I shall keep straight on without stopping. I'm pretty good at it," remarked the girl modestly, "once I get started."

"Practice won't do you no harm. It's not a gift that you're born with, remember. As a baby you never said a word until you were close on two—a year and ten months it was, to be exact.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

You stumbled over the cat, and you used an expression that you must have got from your father. Now, don't say anything for a bit. Just let me think it all out, so that I can give you your instructions. Try not to be idle in the meantime ; set to and light a candle."

The mother's lips moved silently ; her forehead contracted in the effort of invention and careful rehearsal. Once or twice her daughter endeavoured to make suggestions, but to these she would not listen ; holding up a hand as a danger signal, and a warning to stop.

Presently she appeared to have found inspiration, and, rising from the rocking-chair with a stern reproof to rheumatism, she walked up and down the small room. She began to gesticulate. Her daughter cleared the table, clattering the cups and saucers impatiently, and announcing her intention of deferring the formality of washing up until the morning ; this on the grounds that too many subjects should not be crowded on the brain at one and the same time, lest lunacy ensued.

"You turn out of the main road," said the mother, speaking deliberately, "and you walk down on the right-hand pavement—the right-hand—until you come to 26. Now, Muriel, do mind how you knock at the door. Don't overdo it, don't underdo it. Not a single knock ; not a long rat-tat ; try to manage something betwixt and between. When she opens, you say (pretending to be quite civil), 'Pardon me, but does Mrs. Watson by any chance 'appen to be in ?' Let's hear you say it."

"'Excuse me, but is Mrs. Watson at home ?'"

"You're not paying attention. Listen to what I'm saying, and how I say it, and say it after me."

Her daughter obeyed.

"And she'll answer, 'I am Mrs. Watson.' And you'll say, 'Oh, really ; can I speak to you for a few moments ?' That takes you into the passage. Close the front door after you, but don't close it right to ; because when you've finished you'll want to skip off

## THE VENDETTA

sharp without letting her have a chance to say anything back. See?"

"Rather!"

"‘Mrs. Watson!’ you’ll go on, ‘Mrs. Watson, my mother asked me to call and see you about one or two small matters.’ You can say all this quietly, because until she knows who you are—understand what I mean?—she’ll be so pleasant in her manner that you’d think butter wouldn’t melt in her mouth. She won’t recognise you, Muriel; the two families haven’t been on speaking terms since you was in short frocks and her boy was in a knickerbocker suit and a sailor hat. But the moment you tell her who you are, then you’ve got to begin. Mustn’t lose a moment then.”

"I shall start by asking her——"

The girl found herself ordered to dismiss at once the idea that she need give to her parent any sort of help in composition of this delicate matter; all that she had to do was to listen and to learn, and to refrain, if she could, from irrelevant interruption. The mother had often wished the girl might grow up with a due and proper respect for her elders: the prayer, apparently, had miscarried.

"You’ll put your back against the wall, and you’ll say, ‘Mrs. Watson, you seem to be one of those who talk without thinking of what they’re talking about either that or else you’re a malicious low-minded woman and you can take your choice which you’ve been passing remarks about our family on the strength of having been allowed to know us for a short period of time years ago before we found out the kind of person you were and those remarks, Mrs. Watson have come back to us and you probably never thought that your tittle-tattling would travel so far but it has and it’s all been repeated to us word for word the same as you uttered it and you’ve been raking up old grievances Mrs. Watson, and you’ve been saying things that have got no more truth in them than—than—’" She stopped for breath and for a phrase.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

"Nothing at all."

"Let's think of something better than that."

"No more truth in them than you've got sense in your head."

"Not bad," admitted the mother.

"No more truth in them than you've got a right to go making such remarks."

"That's not so good. But the great thing, Muriel, will be to keep right on, and not allow her to stop you. 'Mrs. Watson,' you can say, 'my mother has seen a solicitor about it.'" The girl gave signs of astonishment; the mother declared there could be no harm in making any statement, the exactitude of which could not be disproved. "'Seen a solicitor and he strongly advises her to make a law case of it but my mother says that if she gets damages she'll be no better off because you never made a habit of paying what you owed and she supposes that you're too old to begin now but mother does think that when a person like yourself gets to forty-five'—that'll touch her up, because she's only just over forty, as a matter of fact—'gets to forty-five she ought to try to live a peaceable life and make friendships instead of breaking them and mother says she's got her own opinion about you and if she liked *she* could talk but thank Heaven she's got too much pride in herself to do anything of the kind only if this happens again, she promises you that she'll take action.'"

"Shall I tell her what sort, mother?"

"You'll tell her just what I've told you, miss. No more and no less. Now let's hear what you're going to say."

Prompting and some amendments and many corrections were given, the girl preparing herself the while for out-door promenade and deliberating on the question of head-gear; decision come to that Sunday apparel should be worn for the more perfect abasement of the Watson family. The denunciatory speech became strengthened here and there and its points sharpened; the girl was recalled at the last moment because a new reading of the part had occurred to the mother—a reading in which the

## THE VENDETTA

voice was not raised, but all the barbed sentences delivered in quiet, ordinary tones, and with a pitying smile. Several expressions of face had to be tried ere the right and exactly correct was selected ; the girl went off wearing this carefully, and repeating the opening phrases to herself.

"If you *can* manage to hint," said the mother, at the doorway, "that we've found out something about her at the time before she was married, by all means do so."

She made an attempt to engage in domestic work, but anxiety intervening, she gave this up, and sitting down, rocked gently to and fro, watching the clock and beaming contentedly. Apparently she was reconstituting the scene at the Watsons', and deriving therefrom a considerable amount of calm enjoyment. When the time came for the girl to return, the mother went to the front door. She waited there for a full half-hour ere she perceived Muriel turning the corner ; the girl waved a hand to some one in the main road.

"Now set down," ordered the mother, trembling with eagerness, "set down and tell us all about it."

"Glad I wore my best hat."

"Never dreamed of letting you go in any other. How did she take it all ?"

"And thank goodness I'd got gloves on."

"Begin at the beginning. You knocked at the door ?"

"Knocked at the door," said Muriel dreamily, "and he opened it. He opened it. And oh, mother, he has grown up such a nice-looking young chap, with the straightest nose——"

"I wish now," interrupted the mother crossly, "I wish to goodness now that I'd taken the trouble to put me boots on and go myself."

# ORPHANED

## *A POINT OF VIEW*

**D**OWN comes the winter rain,  
    Spoils my hat and bow,  
Runs into the poll o' me—  
    But mother won't know !

We played and caught a cold  
    Knee deep in snow :  
Such a lucky thing it is  
    That mother won't know.

Rosy, she got lost one night—  
    Couldn't tell where to go.  
Yes—it rather frightened her,  
    But mother didn't know !

Somebody made Willy drunk  
    At the Christmas show.  
Oh, 'twas fun ! It's well for him  
    That mother didn't know.

Howsoever wild we are,  
    Late at school, or slow,  
Mother's never cross with us—  
    Mother don't know.

How we cried the day she died ;  
    How we miss her. . . . Though  
We may now do what we will,  
    Mother won't know !

THOMAS HARDY.

## CONCERNING BREAD-SNATCHERS

BY MRS. W. K. CLIFFORD

A SILENCE fell upon them all in Lady Lynchmere's pleasant drawing-room in Carlos Place. There were no lamps, and the shadows gathered in the corners. But the fire blazed pleasantly, as if intent on business of its own; it made ruddy flickering streaks on the silver of the tea-service, and lighted up the faces—now one and now another—of the group that had been discussing the universe in general, and recent events in particular.

Then spoke Tom Carringford: "Evelyn Wyvern has done an awful thing." They all looked up interested.

You know Tom Carringford, of course? Every one does. He is a boy in face still, with a boy's guileless eyes and happy smile, though he is not young any more; and he has grown too big for elegance: soon he will be a trifle unwieldy—the result of driving in too many hansoms and eating too many luncheons at excellent restaurants. He is a gay philanthropist, as he always was, and he has views about everything—even about hansoms. "I always go in them," he explained once. "Why not? Good work. The poor chaps pay far too much a day for them, and their wives eat far too little at home, unless fares are plentiful. . . . Always take one from a stand if you can and not a stroller, it's fairer. If the men stick at a fixed point, so that we know where to find them, they ought to be found." And these are his views (but he likes his views to be called ethics, he thinks it sounds better) as to payment. "If I take a man for a shilling drive and it's a short one I give him a shilling only, if it's a long one I give him more. But to systematically overpay him is to drive dozens of tired women

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

into an omnibus, when they would gladly spend a shilling, but don't want to spend more, on their own comfort or to be called stingy : so that weak generosity lessens the cabmen's chance of trade, and adds to women's hardships. At night after ten, or in bad weather, poor chaps, an extra coin of course, or a couple of extra coins, with the remark 'there's a tip for you' ; then the man goes away in a good humour, he knows you are kind and not a fool, so you have not demoralised him." Concerning the luncheons, his ethics are not current as yet. Tom prides himself on not reading books, but he knows a good many things, and has opinions in every subject from Persian kittens to bimetallism : to have an opinion on bimetallism is surely a *tour-de-force* ? But to return to Carlos Place.

"What has Evelyn done ?" Mrs. Meadows asked.

"Why, I'll tell you. She wants to go to Spain in the spring. Can't very well afford it, and her people won't treat her. So she and her maid have set to and made blouses—fifty of 'em, out of remnants she bought at sales ; stuff cost a mere nothing, she says, and she is selling them to her friends for a pound each, and offering to make up their own rags for ten shillings, instead of their employing a dressmaker. She has a turn for making clothes it seems."

"But why is it awful ? I think it is very praiseworthy," old Lady Mary asked, with her nice fat chuckle.

"Bread-snatching," said Tom.

Two or three of them looked up. "Bread-snatching ?"

"Bread-snatching," he repeated, with great solemnity. "Aren't there hundreds and thousands of women who make blouses for bread, and shelter, and warmth, to help out-of-work husbands and feed hungry children ; why should Evelyn take their work from them ? What business has she to enter the lists and do paid or unpaid work that takes it from somebody who lives by it ?"

"But if she wants to go to Spain ?"



W. Holman Hunt  
Bodleian 1893  
for Melbury



## CONCERNING BREAD-SNATCHERS

"She needn't go to Spain. Her people have a decent place in North Devon; let her go there and wait till some one treats her to Spain. A generous uncle or aunt will probably turn up, and anyhow she's young enough to wait. It isn't necessary to her eternal salvation to go to Spain next year, in fact it may lead to her eternal—the other thing if some man or woman dies of starvation because she went meddling with their chances of bread-winning."

"But heaps of people make money nowadays who don't do it for a living," Major Maddox observed.

"Let them make it at bridge; then they get it from each other, and don't spoil a respectable trade. The bread-snatching goes on in all sorts of ways. Crowds of women, and men too, do things for the sake of getting a little more money than they need, or only want for some nonsense or other, or because they like to be talked about, or to pose as being clever, or on some other immoral excuse, and they do it under easy conditions, snatching the chances from those who do it for bread and butter. They are a heartless lot. Take the people who write books——"

"Why, your sister Ada wrote a novel," Clara Brabazon put in.

"Of course she did," Tom beamed. "The sort of thing that any well-educated girl could write if she put her mind to it. Ada has no genius, no talent worth mentioning, only some facility. And her mild little love-story served no literary or moral purpose of any kind, perhaps stopped the way of a better one, or at any rate of one as good that had been written because the writer had to get a living."

"It's a bad thing for literature that books should be written merely for money," a quiet woman in the corner said. She was supposed to be clever; her talk was terrible, though she flattered herself that it was intellectual, or at any rate forcible.

"Of course it is," Tom agreed quickly, "but it's better than

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

writing them for vanity's sake ; besides, the bread-winner has probably more experiences to draw upon than the comfortably off young lady who thrusts her immature work and half-baked ideas into a publisher's office. You see a woman like Ada knows a few score well-to-do people who will chatter about her feeble stuff among themselves, and to any outsiders they may come across, so it elbows its way along, and if she knows any editors or critics, if her people ask them to dinner for instance, she cajoles them into treating it with politeness in their papers. This helps her to make some money, on which she jauntily goes abroad or buys a few luxuries she could do without—the market gets overloaded with trash, and the bread-snatcher accomplishes her deadly crime.”

“ But perhaps they give their work and don't take any money.”

“ All the worse if they do it for nothing, or under price ; lowers the market value of work and leads to sweating.”

“ But if,” asked the clever woman, “ a well-off man or woman has genius, what then ; do you mean that it is not to be exercised ? ”

Tom was almost contemptuous. “ Of course it is. Genius has the first right of all. But even genius often goes by unrecognised, because impudence has pushed its way to the front. One comfort is that it generally comes by its own at last, no matter what ills befall it at the outset ; though by that time the worker has sometimes gone under, while the charlatan stays and revels and grows fat—like me.”

“ Express yourself a little more, old chap,” Major Maddox said. “ I mean about books ; there are such a lot of them nowadays. Do you mean that no one has any business to write unless he has genius, or to get his living ? My brother did a book of travel——”

“ That's all right,” said Tom approvingly ; “ he had been to a place few people had seen and some wanted to hear about. What I mean is this, if people have genius they have got to do

## CONCERNING BREAD-SNATCHERS

things, or if they have great talent they ought to do them ; even if they have only highly respectable talent they may do 'em occasionally. If they've a message to give the world, something to tell it, some knowledge of which they are the channel, some information concerning the cannibal islands or the North-West Passage, anything that other people have not got, or if they've only views they honestly think are valuable—why, it's all right ; it's their business, their duty, to strut about in the open. But your feeble meddlers—your writers of batches of novels, or twaddling essays, that no one is a penny the better for reading, and that lots of people inadvertently waste their time on, instead of reading the better things they would if the rubbish wasn't there—it makes me ill to think of it. The only excuse for trash is that it exists because it has provided bread and butter for some one who couldn't do anything else. What we ought to do, but of course we don't, is 'to try and do the thing we can do best as best it can be done.' I didn't say that, you know—not clever enough—chap who was by way of being a greater thinker did. But bread-snatching, to return to it, goes on in all sorts of ways. There are young women who colour Christmas cards, or make horrible little beaten copper things and sell them—they generally pretend it's for charity, but I don't believe 'em, and if it's true, let 'em do their charity in other ways, and leave the people who invent Christmas cards, or beat copper-pots, for a living to get it. They paint ghastly little pictures, which they send to exhibitions, and boast of it when they've sold them, while the real artist is left out, perhaps starves in a garret, while his wife shivers and his babies die——”

“ Pile it up, Tom.”

“ All true. Why, I heard of a woman—a cousin of hers told me—a parson's widow, who did a little musical criticism, to keep her home together—dare say she did it badly, but she was quite right to do it because she only did other things worse. She got a couple of pounds or so a week by it. One day a precious

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fashionable lady, well-off—at any rate much better off than the other woman was—who couldn't do it any better, got hold of the editor and told him she'd write his criticism for nothing in return for the free concert tickets, and she does it to this day, I believe. Now I should like to see that lady sent to the workhouse for a fortnight just to teach her, or sentenced to live in a garret for a month."

"You are almost vicious, Mr. Carrington," Miss Brabazon said, "and I think you are rather horrid: why shouldn't women who can paint pretty pictures sell them? What are they to do with them? Are they not to paint at all, but to hide their talents in the scriptural napkin?"

"They are not to put 'em on the market," said Tom doggedly, "for unless work justifies its existence by its quality it has no business there. Let them decorate their own homes with their pictures; or workhouses and hospitals and other places that can't afford to buy any. If it demoralises the taste of the paupers or the patients it may at any rate cheer them up, and that's a good thing to do."

"And people who have too much leisure, are they to dawdle their lives away?" Lady Lynchmere asked.

"There's plenty of work to do—workhouse women to read to, hospitals to visit, children to mind while mothers go out to work, people to be taught things that are useful, clothes to be made for people who can't buy 'em at all, sick people to cheer; or things to learn that make you more agreeable—all sorts of things."

"Then you don't think that rich people should be idle, Mr. Carrington?"

"No, I don't. There's plenty of work that wants doing, that only the rich can do, and that can't be paid for at all; they should feel it a fine thing to be able to do it, it justifies their wealth. And I'll tell you another thing. A country with an aristocracy that uses its wealth and its influence properly will never allow itself to be governed by a democracy."

## CONCERNING BREAD-SNATCHERS

"But to go back to books. Suppose one likes writing them—or plays?" Poor Lady Lynchmere imagined that she had the dramatic instinct.

"Write 'em—write 'em and burn 'em," answered Tom benevolently. "If one day you really feel that you have done something good enough to live, send it out to see; but take counsel's opinion, not your own, first. Or do it anonymously, then you'll find out whether you have only made a contribution to the public rubbish-heap, or added to the number of good things done in the world."

The clever woman in the corner looked up. "Out of the nature of things in themselves our whole literature's grown," she said, "not out of names, which are only shadows after all."

"Quite right," said Tom approvingly, but he didn't understand her, besides he liked to do the talking himself; "but the stuff's the thing. I should like to see a law passed to have bread-snatchers sent to prison, and perhaps a few hanged, for they injure and kill a class that is not labelled unemployed in print and never parades the streets—it hides in dark corners or desolate rooms—that has no public funds made for it and wants none, a class that suffers in secret and dies in silence."

"You are quite eloquent," Lady Mary chuckled.

"I feel a good deal better," he answered, "but I should think you have had enough of me," and he got up to go.

"Come back and dine," Lady Lynchmere said, "and we'll talk it over this evening."

Tom shook his head. "Wish I could, but I am going to a party at the Carlton. Well, good-bye every one," and he went.

## THE LADY OF THE LAND

Q UEENS may command and courtiers must obey,  
U sage the free-will from submission steals.  
E ach man may answer when a Queen appeals,  
E ach answer tells how grateful is her sway.  
N ever occasion timelier than to-day.

A Queen asks help from every one who feels  
L ove for the poor and pity, and reveals  
E ngland responsive where she leads the way.  
X mas more blest is, Madam, by your hand,  
A s by your charity we shall all take  
N ew pleasure in our giving if it mean  
D evotion to your cause may by you stand  
R egarded as a gift for good-will's sake,  
A nd furthermore,—devotion to our Queen.

HUBERT HENRY DAVIES.

# THE OLD HOME

## A REMINISCENCE

BY MAX PEMBERTON

WE carry few memories from childhood to the after life; but such as go with us are imperishable. The old home, built as a house beautiful in the garden of our affection, what freak of destiny bids us revisit it when the voices are silent and the gates are closed to us! What evil spirit of Time bids us stand to ask ourselves if it were worthy of our love, the Palace Glorious indeed or the Palace Fabulous of a child's imagination. We have crossed the seas, it may be, that we may bare the head upon the threshold and say, "This was my mother's house." Through long years of exile we have carried the images triumphantly. "Ah, what a place it was," we have told our friends. Were there ever such gardens, such stables, such tremendous rooms. It seemed a journey when our lives were young to pass from the stables to the barns; an undertaking to go from hall to library. And all the heroes of our environment! Mr. Bates, the gardener, who stood for Prime Minister in our boyish government; the prince of a coachman, who seemed to us a very Admirable Crichton; the neighbours in the cottages, great people all, and to be approached with circumspection. Tell not aloud the true story of these. Let them remain heroes to the end; for they, also, were actors in the old home.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

I had not visited Shropshire for twenty-five years when an entirely illegal motor-car carried me there last summer. Much of our journey was stereotyped. We halted at Stratford-on-Avon and heard the American tongue at many shrines. We explored the country of the "North Warwickshire," and recalled the names of hunting squires of long ago ; we touched the outskirts of Birmingham, and wondered what Jack Mytton would have to say to them. It was here that the idea came to me to revisit the old home. My recollections of it were vivid as in the unforgotten days of childhood. I recalled a house of three gables standing upon the brink of a wide valley, beyond which rose the green shapes of the Lickey Hills. Byre and stable and garden, every path stood fast in my recollection. Lonely lanes, woods abounding, the stream wherein the poacher of ten plunged his arm for trout right boldly ; the nail-makers' cottages ; the farms a-many—all these contributed to the picture which memory painted. And this is to say nothing of the dreams ; or of the birth of the knowledge of life and fear and death which makes the hour momentous in the story of the child. These were my mysteries then ; some of them remain mysteries to this day, vivid pages which no logic can blot out.

I was no more than ten years old, I suppose, when, asleep in an upper room in the gabled house, I dreamed of fire and its terrors. So real a dream it was to one whose imagination had no prematurely morbid bias, that I awoke at the dead of night in a panic bordering upon frenzy. Looking from my bedroom window I perceived the stable-yard to be lighted by many lanterns, heard the sound of men's voices, saw horses led to and fro ; but more ominous than these, detected, with awe unspeakable, the brass helmets of busy firemen. They had come to us to beg help upon the way ; for yonder, across the fields, the sky was red above a holocaust of ricks. How it came that the small boy dreamed of it, the psychologists must say. So



BY FRED PEGRAM



## THE OLD HOME

small a thing, and yet to Ten Years Old an unforgotten tragedy wherein the actors were as golden knights, the sky a celestial city aflame, and the end of the world most surely at hand.

Or again, when but a year had passed, a cry was heard at dead of night from the lonely lane beyond our gates. At dawn, there is a bloodstain in the road ; policemen ride out from Birmingham ; they drink our ale and go away. The child is left with the story of a passing dog-cart and a man murdered for his rents therein ; of a horse galloping wildly away, and an assassin fleeing through the woods by night. No greatness here, but all the vulgarity of the Calendar ; and yet to the lad of the fields and the hills how fearsome a thing, what a dwelling upon it all, what a page to turn with trembling fingers and flee from aghast. For months I did not dare to go down that lane alone. The assassin must surely be lurking still in the woods nearby.

Such stories as these come down to us from every home. It is inevitable that the child remember the tragedies rather than the comedies. A thousand loving caresses, gifts from many hands, the memory of illness, the routine of the day may be forgotten ; but tragedy never. The boy has an appetite for horrors beyond that of an Adelphi pit ; and when in after years he returns, a wanderer in quest of the secrets of youth's ecstasy, it will be the grimmer stories not the voices of laughter which go with him. Herein, however, no disappointments lie. It is the house itself, the environment, which will first mock his memories. Those great rooms, which seemed so vast to the childish eye, why, you could not whip a cat in them, says the man. The glorious gardens—what mere cabbage patches the age of forty can make of them. And that stable-yard wherein you played, believing that regiments might march there, is it not but a bit of a box after all. So the illusions pass one by one. Pride is humbled and does not speak.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

It is the old home, but not that which our childhood built and whose memory we have treasured.

I looked for many landmarks as I approached the old gabled house in Shropshire, but discovered none of them. As a wild beast that goeth forth by day, the jerry-builder had advanced and left the dry bones of modernity in his path. That long, lonely lane by which you made the house in the old days—a lane of spectres and of one horrid phantom with bull's horns and a lion's face—now it was a street of desirable villas, and no ghosts at all if the tax-gatherer be not a phantom. None the less I carried hope a little way with me yet. The dark wood where the burn went down in a shower of silver spray, and the wild bird's note could be heard all day—that, at least, might speak of hours apart and the unforgotten dreams of long ago. Alas, it was not to be. So had the landscape changed that the very site of my delectable haven could hardly be discovered. They told me that it had become a County Council park! Yonder, where the gamekeeper's hut used to stand, charity had built a convent, vast and straight, and yellow and ugly. It blotted the landscape as with a mound of sand. The distant hills, suggesting a new world of silence beyond their green heights, you cannot see them to-day for factory chimneys which rise as plague-struck trees above a valley of desolation. Birmingham, said a new enthusiastic, spreads out her hands afar. I shuddered, for the hands of Birmingham were unwashed.

And how shall one go back to the romance of it all which has been treasured as a possession beyond price these many years. Will it ever be possible again to recall the sweet stillness of that pastoral scene as boyhood knew it? Can the picture of the old home return—the music of the distant bells coming across the pastures; the bent figures of the fields; the crimson skies above the Black Country speaking of the nether world; the jangling harness and the creaking farm-cart; the view halloa and the red-

## THE OLD HOME

coated figures of the strenuous hunt? I would that I could think so. For the moment, this revolting spectre of "Municipal Progress" bars the way. The desirable villa leers at me; the County Council park forbids me to walk upon the grass. I turn from the old home back to the seething streets of London and try to shut reality from my eyes.

"One thing is certain and the rest is lies;  
The flower that once has bloomed for ever dies."

But the memory of the old home will not die. It will make its appeal to the heart and not to the eyes. Time may shatter the fond illusions but Time will recreate them. The eternal hope looks backward, saying, "This was Eldorado, this was the house of Love." We have forgotten the words, it may be; but the memory of the voices is left. They go with us upon the Pilgrimage, telling us that the old home was all we believed it to be; its sentiments as real, the heart of it as spacious as our imaginations could wish.

And that is a true message from a house of dreams—those dreams that meant so much to us when the world was young.

## FOR PITY'S SAKE

COLD and darkness and rain,  
Pale children who cry for bread,  
Willing workers pleading in vain  
For the labour by which they are fed ;  
Homes dismantled by sure degrees,  
And the hungry wolf, watching the door,  
Dumb suffering, hopelessness, these  
Vex our poor brethren, evermore.

Shall we sit wrapt in warmth and in ease,  
Unregarding their pitiful cry,  
While the strong workers shiver and freeze,  
And the weak and the aged die ?  
In this time of good tidings for all,  
Shall we turn from this patient pain,  
Nor stoop down to the myriads who fall  
To lift them to hope once again ?

What though if for some it may be,  
'Tis not all without blame that they sink,  
In deep waters of misery  
Drowned, hopeless through sloth or through drink ;  
But the innocent children who bear  
The default of their fathers, shall they  
Plead in vain with low wails of despair  
While we turn unregarding away ?

## FOR PITY'S SAKE

Nay, nay, open kind hands, yet combine  
Wise forethought and pitying heart,  
Fulfilling the Purpose Divine  
Which they ne'er may accomplish, apart ;  
Taking heed, lest the alms which you give  
Sap the manhood which fathers our race,  
And the gold which should aid them to live  
Sink our brothers in deeper disgrace !

Not arraigning the Laws or the State  
With outcries anarchical, loud,  
Nor the merciless pride of the Great  
Comes our peaceful long-suffering crowd.  
Oh, Rulers and Statesmen ! devise  
Of your wisdom some politic plan,  
Some measure, beneficent, wise,  
Which shall raise, and not lower the Man !

O'er the sad East, in country and town,  
Their brothers are martyred to-day,  
'Neath the hoof of the Cossack borne down,  
By wild dreams of revolt led astray.  
Though they gain not their mirage of Good,  
Though they own not a heavenly friend,  
Though hope's fire seem extinguished in blood,  
They fight undismayed to the end.

And the groan of their suffering mounts high  
To the careless, unpitying stars  
Far and wide, 'neath the face of the sky  
Rage rebellions and murderous wars ;

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

Oh, poor brothers ! at last may you gain,  
At last, after blood, after fire,  
Relief from oppression and pain,  
And the peace of your yearning desire !

But here in our England serene,  
Secure on her ocean-based throne,  
Our Una, our Faërie Queen  
Gives ear to her people who moan.  
Oh, ye nobles of high degree !  
Oh, ye burdened with lightly-won gold !  
Pity, pity the misery  
Of humble homes, hungry and cold !

Give the aid, through the pure strength of love  
Which your pride would deny them through fear ;  
Let new stirrings of sympathy move  
Keen eyes never filled with a tear.  
Think of sad mothers, fainting with care  
For their young children's misery,  
And strong fathers, who starve, and yet bear  
Uncomplaining, because they are free !

LEWIS MORRIS.

*November 29, 1905.*

## WAPPING-ON-THAMES

BY W. W. JACOBS

**A**S a residential neighbourhood Wapping is perhaps undesirable, though a considerable population contrives to exist in the narrow streets hemmed in between the dock walls and the warehouses fringing the river. For the river itself is completely hidden, except where the swing-bridges, which give entrance to the docks, afford a passing glimpse.

From a picturesque point of view Wapping was no doubt much better in the days when docks and swing-bridges were unknown; when the bow-windows of its ancient taverns projected quaintly over the river and the watermen's stairs inspired the muse of the song-writer. Then the raucous bellowings of hurrying steamers were unheard, and sailing craft thoughtfully waited for tides, while master-mariners sat drinking in the bow-windows aforesaid.

The old church and the charity school, with the overgrown graveyard opposite, with its rank grass and depressed trees, are the remains of those days. The green of the churchyard is a relief to the bricks and mortar, for trees are scarce in Wapping, though there are a few others in front of the old-fashioned houses on the breezy pier-head hard by—trees which, having been coaxed to grow in that uncongenial spot, conscientiously endeavour to indicate the seasons, and make very few mistakes considering.

High Street, Wapping, the principal thoroughfare, realising, possibly, that High Streets are apt to adhere too slavishly to one

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

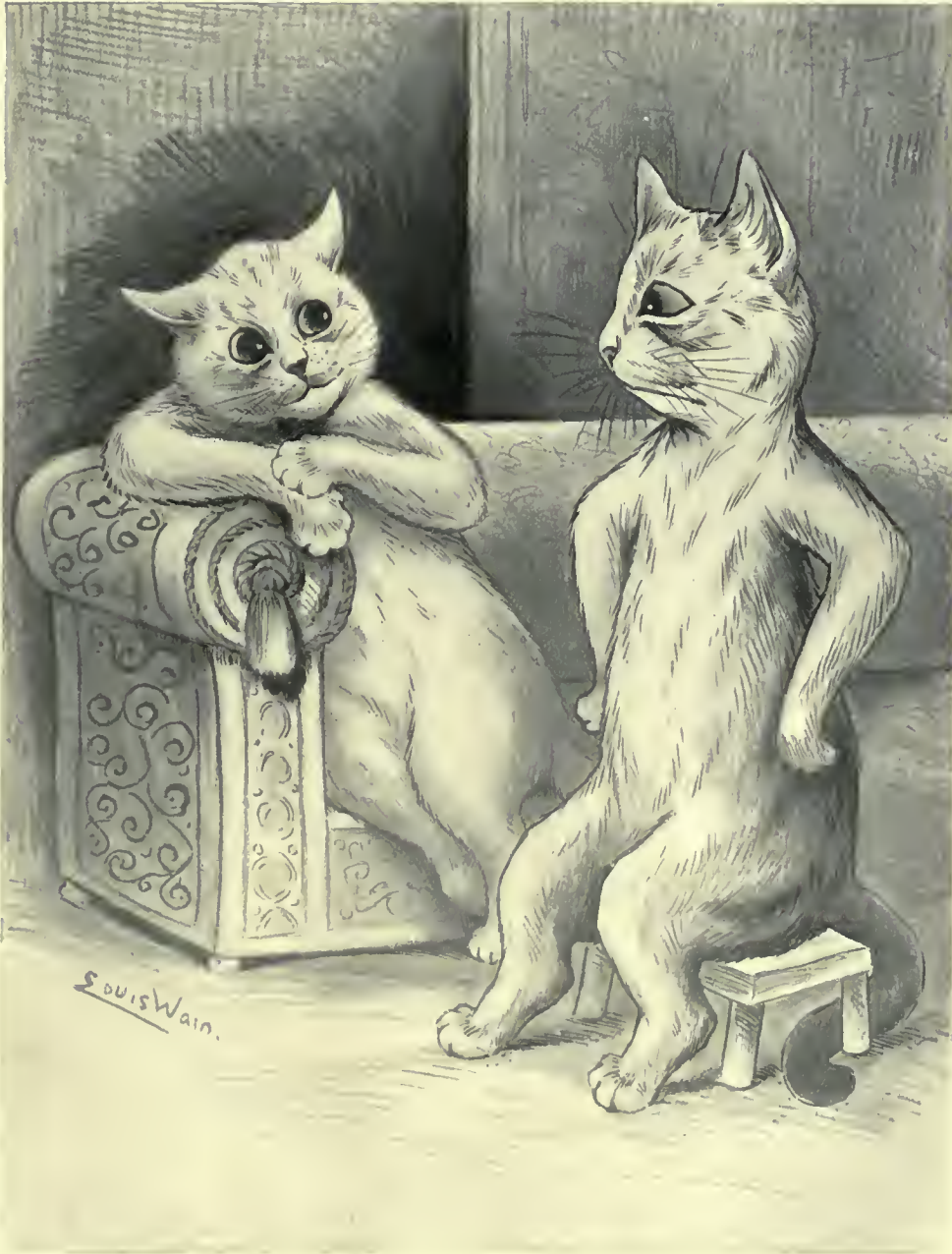
pattern, appears to have determined to be original. It sternly eschews the drapers and hatters, the bootmakers and tailors of other High Streets, and confines its retail trade almost entirely to coffee-shops and taverns. The coffee-shops are as conservative as the street, and one window is much like another—herrings, rejoicing in their strength, competing for favour with bacon of guaranteed mildness and eggs of blameless exterior.

Early in the morning the night-watchmen are awakened by vans, and late at night their sleep is broken by them. For Wapping revels in vans of all shapes and all sizes, but preferably large, and has laid down granite roads for their especial delectation. The vans are from all quarters of London, and their drivers from all parts of the country, but the latter are the willing victims of one dominant idea. It is the ambition of every carman—the thing for which he plots and plans, and swears and lies—to be attended to out of his turn. The more out of his turn the better, and a boy of innocent aspect and no principles, who will ably second his perjuries, is as the apple of his eye. This, and sitting in dangerous attitudes on the tail-board of the van, or doing a double-shuffle on the extreme edge of the kerb, is the van-boy's part in life. In his spare moments he watches his chief back horses, for, as a backer of horses in a blameless sense, the river-side carman has probably no equal in the world. At one time, in addition to the road, he had about two feet of pavement to manœuvre on as well, but now he has been warned off by iron posts of the most upright and rigid bearing.

Down Tower Hill, thinking no evil, comes a mildewed four-wheeler driven by an elderly cabman, who pulls up so sharply at the bottom of the hill that the horse slides a yard or two and then tries to sit down.

“Drive on, cabman!” says a shrill voice inside, as the owner of it knuckles at the glass. “What are you stopping for? It's farther on!”

“All right, lady,” says the cabman. He knows that the



SHE: "Do you love me for myself alone?"  
HE: "Well, I think so, but you've got such a deuced lot  
of money, you know, that I can't help thinking of all the  
lovely things I could buy you."

BY LOUIS WAIN



## WAPPING-ON-THAMES

sex requires humouring, and "clucks" the horse on exactly seventeen inches.

"Any chance o' gettin' by, sir?" he inquires with deep respect of a tall policeman.

The tall policeman eyes the traffic critically and a Pickford's van severely. Pickford's horses are pawing the pavement, while their tail-board is giving great offence to a pair of horses behind.

"Pickford!" yells the tall policeman with great suddenness.

Half-a-dozen voices take up the cry of "Pickford," and Pickford's representative not being forthcoming (he is at the present moment making Language, with a capital L, do for argument with the foreman), a small boy appears from the depths of the van to see what he can do.

"Put your van back a bit!" says the tall policeman austerely.

The urchin grasps the horses' heads, brings them forward a bit, thrusts them back, slipping and stumbling with their heads in the air, and having made at least a foot more space, pauses triumphantly and asks, "How's that?"

The only reply of the tall policeman, who is a man of few words, is to bawl for "Pickford" again. The cabman, in the most familiar manner, also calls for "Pickford," and a string of vehicles behind him also call on the name of "Pickford" with profane fervour. "Pickford" turns up at last in a heated condition, having signally failed with the foreman, and grasping his horses' heads, backs them violently. The commotion that ensues is tremendous, the docile and intelligent animals behind, realising that it is a case of *sauf qui peut*, going where they can.

There is now room for the procession to pass, and the cabman, having brooded over his wrongs until he is word-perfect, tells the carman his opinion of him as he goes by. It is a long opinion, quite a character-study in fact, and despite the haste of his fares, he walks his horse so that the offender shall not miss a word of it.

"'Ermitage Wharf?" he inquires politely of a bystander, turning a deaf ear to his adversary's reply.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

"Straight ahead," says the man addressed, "but you can't get by!"

"Ho! can't I?" says the cabman, with the air of a man who has just done greater things than that. "An' w'y not?"

"Cos the bridge is swung," says the other cheerfully.

The cabman swings himself off his box, and opening the door of his vehicle, breaks the news to his fares. The three ladies lean forward anxiously, and with one accord blame him for it, one lady remarking darkly that four-wheelers are all alike, and drawing offensive comparisons between the present vehicle and a hansom.

"I can't 'elp the bridge being swung," says the cabman. "It ain't no pleasure for me standing here listening to you. Ar long 'll it be, mate?"

"I think they're almost through now," says the other. "There's just a few empty lighters going into the dock—unless the *Evening Star* is coming out," he adds thoughtfully.

Fortunately for all concerned the gallant ship mentioned does not come out. The bridge swings together again, and the cabman, gathering up his reins, rattles briskly over the stones to his destination.

If the traffic in the streets is thick, that on the river is almost as bad. Huge steamers come slowly and cautiously up, moaning plaintively with their steam-sirens whenever they see anything about to run into them. At times there appears to be no offing at all, and even penny steamers—the most expert craft on the river—give a low whistle and wonder what is going to happen next. It is usual at such moments for an old and leaky boat, laden with small boys, who prefer this mode of whiling away the dinner-hour to eating, to stop in mid-stream to recover an oar. Extraordinary feats of navigation are performed by the crew before this is accomplished, but they get it at last, and ignoring the remarks hurled at them from the various craft, settle down to work again and ram a steam collier.

Work on the wharves is in full swing, and the cranes are busy

## WAPPING - ON - THAMES

lowering goods into the gaping holds beneath. Sometimes the freight drops from the slings on to the labourers, and once a crane we knew—ordinarily a well-behaved, reliable worker—took too much aboard and plunged fifteen feet into the river below. It took the driver with it, and when his friends got him up, as a preliminary to burying him, they found, to their astonishment, that he was alive. He was never a man to make much fuss; and after he had sat on the jetty and been patted on the back, he looked round at the place the crane had left, and said that perhaps, as there didn't seem to be anything for him to do, he might have a half-holiday for once. He added, as an extra reason, that he felt a little bit shaken.

It is not until Sunday arrives that Wapping becomes quiet, and then the change is almost oppressive in its thoroughness. The streets are practically deserted in the morning, except for a few men who have got up early by force of habit rather than the promptings of virtue, and a chance cat slinking furtively along in the shadow of the warehouses, ready to dart beneath a gateway at the first sign of a dog.

# THE KING AND THE STROLLER

## A COMPARISON

**T**HE Stroller's life is freedom true  
    (A fact I'm now attesting),  
The King—well he's an Actor too,  
    Hardworked and never "resting."  
From eight to twelve your Strollers play  
    (Say twelve, to be within time),  
Your King plays fifty parts a day  
    From dawn to turning-in time.  
The King dies once and dies outright,  
    Then flies to regions upper :  
The Stroller dies three times a night,  
    Then toddles home to supper.  
With perils dark and dangers drear  
    A King too often grapples :  
The deadliest missiles Strollers fear  
    Are oranges and apples.

On kingly crimes  
    Falls vengeance dread ;  
A King sometimes  
    May lose his head.  
Though his endeavour  
    Audience quiz,  
An Actor never  
    Loses his.

## THE KING AND THE STROLLER

The King who strikes unlawful blows,  
His country always blames him :  
The Actor stabs a dozen foes,  
Yet no policeman claims him.  
When Monarchs waste a nation's gold,  
They rouse the papers daily :  
When Actors give "a sum twice-told"  
Their country bears it gaily.  
A King from Royalty deposed  
Finds life a vain chimæra :  
The Actor when his theatre's closed  
Turns lightly to the *Era*.  
In short this summing-up you'll find  
A very useful factor—  
A King both "P's" and "Q's" must mind—  
His "Q's" alone an Actor.

Oh don't suppose  
A Royal crown  
Is bed of rose  
Or seat of down ;  
Compelled to State  
As Monarchs are,  
A Stroller's fate  
Is fairer far !

W. S. GILBERT.

# MELODY IN E

EDWARD GERMAN.

*Allegretto con grazia.*

The first system of musical notation is in E major (three sharps) and 2/4 time. The right hand begins with a melody marked *p* (piano). The left hand provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. Pedal points are indicated at the end of the system with the word "Ped." and an asterisk.

The second system continues the piece. It features a *rit.* (ritardando) marking followed by a *cantabile.* (cantabile) section. The right hand melody is marked *f* (forte) and then *p a tempo.* (piano at tempo). The left hand accompaniment is more active. Pedal points are marked with "Ped." and an asterisk.

The third system shows a continuation of the melody. The right hand melody is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The left hand accompaniment features more complex chords and arpeggios. Pedal points are marked with "Ped." and an asterisk.

The fourth system continues the piece. The right hand melody is marked *p* (piano). The left hand accompaniment is more active. Pedal points are marked with "Ped." and an asterisk.

The fifth system is the final one on the page. It continues the melody and accompaniment. Pedal points are marked with "Ped." and an asterisk.

## MELODY IN E

First system of musical notation. The key signature is E major (three sharps). The music is written for piano. The first staff (treble clef) begins with a melody marked *mf*. The second staff (bass clef) provides accompaniment. Pedal points are indicated by "Ped." and asterisks (\*) at the end of the first and third measures of the second staff.

Second system of musical notation. The first staff continues the melody, marked *pp*. The second staff continues the accompaniment. A pedal point is indicated by "Ped." and an asterisk (\*) at the end of the first measure of the second staff.

Third system of musical notation. The first staff begins with the instruction *Meno mosso.* followed by *dim.* and *rall.* The melody is marked *ppp*. The second staff continues the accompaniment. Pedal points are indicated by "Ped." and an asterisk (\*) at the end of the first and third measures of the second staff.

## THE WORKHOUSE MAN

### *A COCKNEY SKETCH*

**T**HERE'S a refuge for all as is broke to the world,  
Where one looks like another perhaps at first sight,  
Where the dresses ain't smart, an' the hair isn't curled,  
Where the heart's mostly heavy, an' diet is light.  
It's the workhouse I mean, as me an' the wife  
'Ad to face in old age, but she sez to me, "Joe,  
We're seeking a shelter from sorrow and strife,  
An' we mustn't forget, it's together we go."

They're kind as they can be to paupers like us,  
So long as we makes neither bother nor fuss;  
We don't put on flesh, 'tain't good form to grow fat,  
But we do see each other! There's something in that.  
When you're used to the life, 'tain't a bad sort of life,  
If you look at it just as a bit of a change,  
For there's lodging and food for yourself an' the wife,  
Tho' when nearin' the end to be parted seems strange.

I'm close upon eighty, the missus won't own  
As she'll never see seventy-seven again,  
The children is gone and we're 'ere all alone,  
But they let us talk over the past now and then.



BY CHAS. A. BUEHEL.



## THE WORKHOUSE MAN

At Christmas there's singing, the singers is fine,  
But there's sure to be one as sings "Auld Lang Syne."  
The missus she cries, an' I—looks for my 'at,  
But we listen together, there's something in that!

Then on Sundays we all goes to church for a while,  
Where we 'ears the old story told over agin,  
And sometimes the missus looks up with a smile  
As she 'ears of a crown that the patient may win.  
Ain't it strange they should part us in church—in the place  
Where, when life was before us, we two was made one.  
It's the thought of that time brings a smile to 'er face,  
For the dream ain't forgot, tho' the dreaming is done.

When we meet it's outside, an' there's tears in her eyes,  
But I know 'tain't for sorrow the old woman cries,  
Sez she—when we've finished our bit of a chat—  
"It's 'omeward together dear! Something in that."

ALBERT CHEVALIER.

## A CAROL OF CHRISTMAS

BY A JEW

**M**Y compliments to Christmas, in that it preserves for us the word "merry," the idea of which seems to have faded out of life. Strenuously occupied in saving worlds and building up empires, or, at least, battling against their decay, the man in the street stalks strategically through a sombre universe, feverishly perpending fiscal problems. He takes up the white man's burden, but not in the sense of carolling it. He forgets that a mighty kingdom without happiness at its heart is but a melancholy giant. Your genial dwarf has a wiser time withal.

Considerations like these reconcile me to the pagan aspects of Christmas, to the monstrous paradox of celebrating the birth of Jesus with pantomimes, though I find it hard to swallow the live oxen I see outside butchers' shops, ticketed, "Choose your Christmas joint." The large, pathetic eyes remind me too critically of those that gleam so naïvely in the paintings of the manger.

But, historically, I recognise that evolution, not revolution, is the law of human life, that traces of earlier feasts are kept in Santa Claus's stocking, and that the Christian festival was compelled to take over, and transform to higher import, the saturnalia of earlier religions and natural celebrations of the winter solstice. Holly and mistletoe do not grow in Palestine; the snowy landscapes of our Christmas-cards are not known of Nazareth or Bethlehem; mince-pie was not on the menu of the Magian kings, and the Christmas-tree has its roots in

## A CAROL OF CHRISTMAS

Teutonic soil. But, even as the painters of each race conceived Christ in their own image, so does each nation unthinkingly figure His activities in its own climatic setting. And perhaps in thus universalising the Master, the peoples obeyed a true instinct, for no race is able to receive lessons from "foreigners." The message, as well as the man, must be translated into native terms—a psychological fact which missionaries should understand.

Nor is it in the Palestine of to-day that the true environment of the Gospels can best be recovered, for, though one may still meet the shepherd leading his flock, the merchant dangling sideways from his ass, or Rebecca carrying her pitcher on her shoulder, that is not the Palestine of the Apostolic period, but the Palestine of the patriarchs, reproduced by decay and desolation. The Palestine through which the Galilæan peasant wandered was a developed kingdom of thriving cities and opulent citizens, of Roman roads and Roman pomp. Upon those bleak hill-sides, where to-day only the terraces survive—the funereal monuments of fertility—the tangled branchery of olive groves lent magic to the air. That sea of Galilee, down which I have sailed in one of the only two smacks, was alive with a fleet of fishing-vessels. Yes; in the palimpsest of Palestine 'tis an earlier writing than the Christian that has been revealed by the fading of the later inscriptions of her civilisation. And even where, in some mountain village, the rainbow-hued crowd may still preserve for us the chronology of Christ, a bazaar of mother-o'-pearl mementoes will jerk us rudely back into our own era. But—saddest of all!—the hands of Philistine piety have raised churches over all the spots of sacred story. Even Jacob's well is roofed over with ecclesiastic plaster; incongruous images of camels getting through church porches to drink confuse the historic imagination. Churches are after all a way of shutting out the heavens, and the great open-air story of the Gospels seems rather to suffer asphyxiation, overlaid by these countless chapels and

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

convents. Is it, perhaps, allegorical of the perversion of the Christ-teaching?

This suspicion that "the secret of Jesus" has been darkened, and a doctrine of Life—"work while ye have the light, that ye may be children of light"—turned into a doctrine of Death, comes ever to my soul as I go through innumerable dark churches of Italy, those heavy, airless glooms, heavier with the sense of faded frescoes and worm-eaten pictures, and vaults and crypts and mouldering frippery and mildewed relics, and saintly bones mocked by jewelled shroudings and dim-burning oil lamps—the blue sky of Italy shut out as in a pious perversity. Are these the shrines of the Master who drew His parables and metaphors from the vineyard and the sheepfold? The paintings of the Old Masters of Art and Faith serve further to misrepresent the teaching of the Founder. Their insistence on the more dramatic elements of the great spiritual tragedy throws Christianity quite out of perspective. Doubtless, 'tis more difficult to represent in art the everyday teaching of the prophet of righteousness, the stinging satirist of hypocrisy, the lover of light and of little children. Unfortunately, pictures are the theological manuals of the simple (*Picturæ sunt idiotarum libri*), and hence the falsification of the great message of peace and goodwill. The living teacher was overcast by the livid light of the tomb, and buried in the Latin of the Church. Perhaps the masses are only able to receive Truth crucified.

The humanitarian turn given to Yuletide by the genius of Dickens was at bottom a return from the caricature to the true concept. Dickens converted Christmas to Christianity. And to-day 'tis held in so truly catholic a spirit that no man has an excuse for not eating his pudding like a Christian, and Jewish circles have adopted it so fanatically that the little Jewish girl could ask compassionately, "Mother, have the Christians also a Christmas?"

But over large stretches of the planet and of history it is Christianity that has been converted to Paganism, as the condition of its existence. Russia was baptized a thousand years ago, but

## A CAROL OF CHRISTMAS

she seems to have a duck's back for holy water. And even in the rest of Europe, upon what parlous terms the Church still holds its tenure of nominal power. What parson dares speak out in a crisis, what bishop dares flourish the logia of Christ in the face of a heathen world? The old gods still govern—if they do not rule. Thor and Odin, Mars and Venus—who knows that they do not dream of a return to their ancient thrones, if, indeed, they are aware of their exile. Their shrines still await them in the forests and glades; every rock still holds an altar. And do they demand their human temples, lo, the Pantheon stands stable in Rome, and on the hill of Athens the Acropolis shines in immortal marble. Their statues are still in adoration, and how should a poor outmoded deity understand that we worship him as art, not as divinity? It does but add to his confusion that now and anon prayers ascend to him as of yore, for how should a poor Olympian whose toe has been faith-bitten understand that he has been catalogued as pope or saint? Perchance some drowsing Druid god, as he perceives our scrupulous ritual of holly and fir-branch, imagines his worship unchanged, and glads to see the vestal led under the mistletoe by his officiating priest. Perchance in the blaze of Snapdragon, some purblind deity beholds his old fire-offerings, and the savour of Turkey mounts as incense to his Norse nostrils. Shall we rudely arouse him from his dream of dominion, shall we tell him that he and his gross ideas were banished two millenniums ago, and that the world is now under the sway of gentleness and love? Nay, let him dream his happy dream; let sleeping gods lie. For who knows how vigorously his old lustfulness and blood-thirst might revive; who knows what new victims he might claim at his pyres, were he clearly to behold his power still un usurped, his Empire still the kingdom of the world!

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

# FATHER TIME AND HIS CHILDREN\*

A NEW YEAR'S INTERLUDE FOR SCHOOL-GIRLS

BY W. L. COURTNEY

FATHER TIME (*seated by himself in a chair in centre of stage*).

I LOVE them all ! I love them all !  
My merry months, from spring to fall ;  
From summer's heat to winter's cold ;  
They bring me happiness untold.  
Unbid, they serve my least behest—  
I know not which I love the best !

JANUARY (*peeping in from side of stage*).

May I come in ?

TIME.

Come in, you rogue !

What is the season's latest vogue ?

JANUARY.

Oh, muffs and tippets, furry hats,  
And all the gentlemen wear spats,  
And all the ladies put on veils,  
And ice is found in all the pails ;  
And little children hate their tubs,  
And biting frost all noses rubs,  
And old men wear a thicker vest—  
Surely your Lordship likes me best ?

[*Dances round him and takes up a position by the side of his chair.*]

\* All rights reserved.

# FATHER TIME AND HIS CHILDREN

TIME.

Wait till I see your sisters, dear.  
Well, who is this? Appear, appear!

*Enter FEBRUARY.*

FEBRUARY.

Your second-born, my worthy sire!  
Who comes with all the troubles dire  
Of rain and sleet and blinding snow  
Which fill all eyes, and trickling go  
Adown the backs of shivering men.  
They do not like me much; but then  
I do not mind their hate confest—  
You love me, Father, much the best.  
*[Dances with JANUARY round his chair.]*

TIME.

You saucy child! Well, here's a kiss  
To keep you quiet. Who is this?

*Enter MARCH.*

MARCH.

I'm blustering March, a tyrant wild,  
I am your Honour's noisiest child!  
All down the streets I make a rout  
And turn umbrellas inside out,  
And blow down slates and chimneys tall.  
And drive men's hats in eddyng squall!  
Each peck of dust I broadcast fling  
Is worth the ransom of a King!  
*[The three Months dance together.]*

TIME.

Mad creatures, cease! Do what I bid ye!  
Your antics make one downright giddy!

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

*Enter APRIL.*

APRIL.

I am a shy and trembling thing,  
A fairy harbinger of Spring.  
With softest rain and gentlest gale  
I woo the hill, the plain, the vale.  
There's health and beauty in my breeze,  
And when I weep——

TIME.

You make me sneeze !

*[Sneezes loudly.]*

Be quiet, do, and join your friends.

*[The four dance.]*

Ah, who is this, who hither wends ?

*Enter MAY.*

MAY.

All flowers and sunshine, soft I move,  
To teach poor mortals how to love !  
Young men and maidens courting go,  
Whisp'ring their secrets sweet and low  
Adown the lanes, begirt with May,  
While cuckoo sings the livelong day.  
The tender grass with dew is wet—  
I am my father's chosen pet !

TIME.

Don't be too sure, my blooming child !  
I've known you anything but mild.

*[Dance as before.]*

But see, who comes ?



BY FREDERIC SHIELDS, A.R.W.S.



# FATHER TIME AND HIS CHILDREN

*Enter JUNE.*

JUNE.

The lovely June !

When birds sing out a merry tune  
And roses clamber round the porch ;  
Unclouded suns can—sometimes—scorch ;  
When men and boys at cricket play,  
And house-rent's paid on Lady-day.  
You like me best ?

TIME.

I'm not quite clear ;  
Sometimes your welcome's rather dear.  
June 24th's not always fine,  
And when it rains——

*Enter JULY.*

JULY.

I come to shine !

The grass is long and lush and sweet,  
And all the sunny hours can fleet  
With dancing steps across the lea  
To summer's merry minstrelsy !  
There is no month throughout the year  
Which wears a better, braver cheer !

TIME.

H'm—what about St. Swithin, pet ?  
And forty days of constant wet ?  
Well, next man in ! Come, look alive !  
We draw the stumps at half-past five !

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

*Enter* AUGUST.

AUGUST.

With oats and barley crowned am I—  
A month of jocund revelry !  
The harvest waggon's heaped with corn,  
The harvest moon shines on till morn,  
The fields are stripped, 'mid rustic play—  
St. Lubbock keeps Bank Holiday !

TIME (*doubtfully*).

They say the British farmers swear  
That you're not what you were, my dear !  
Bread is too cheap, love, nowadays,  
And agriculture seldom pays.  
Well, better luck next year—— [*A gun goes off.*  
Come in !  
Good gracious ! What's that dreadful din !

*Enter* SEPTEMBER.

SEPTEMBER.

With banging guns amid the stubble  
I give the partridge endless trouble !  
Poor little bird, his fate is booked,  
But he's so very nice when cooked !  
At Michaelmas the goose is roasted,  
And oysters——

TIME.

Hush, enough you've boasted !  
Dear me ! I hardly could be thinner—  
D'you think I don't enjoy a dinner ?  
Peace, little glutton ! Silence, child !

SEPTEMBER (*whispering to sisters*).  
Oh, Father's getting rather riled !

# FATHER TIME AND HIS CHILDREN

*Enter* OCTOBER.

OCTOBER.

October comes to give men cheer,  
With purple grapes and mild-brewed beer!  
The days grow short, the nights are cold,  
The year's beginning to be old.  
The streets are wet with constant mire,  
And aren't we glad to get a fire!

TIME (*shivering*).

Don't make me shiver ere I need.  
You are a forward child indeed!  
Two months to Christmas! Deary me!  
What is this wondrous form I see?

*Enter* NOVEMBER.

NOVEMBER.

Enwreathed in fog, all grim and grey,  
I hide from human sight the day:  
The sun himself, a copper orb,  
Can scarce the clinging mists absorb:  
Poor London lives 'neath darkest sky,  
And gas and water rates are high!

TIME.

Ugh! Come to me, child—no more faces—  
You're bright enough in country places,  
Where cubs are hunted at the dawn  
And pheasants shot from early morn;  
Only in cities careless folk  
Cannot as yet consume their smoke!  
Aha! At last, my Benjamin,  
My youngest child comes tripping in!

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

*Enter* DECEMBER.

DECEMBER.

Holly and ice and pantomimes,  
And minor poets' hackneyed rhymes  
Of Noel and of Wenceslas,  
Or turkeys, mince-pies, and the glass  
Which always cheers the festive guest—  
Surely I bring of boons the best  
To all who love a merry meeting,  
A good old-fashioned Christmas greeting!

TIME.

You do, you do! Come, take your places,  
And range yourselves with happy faces  
Before my chair. Come now, confess  
You want to hear a Father bless?  
Which do I love the best, you ask?  
H'm, let me see—a tedious task  
To answer that, and foolish too!

*[Pointing to them in turn.]*

'Tis you—and you—and you—and you!  
I love you all, I love you all,  
My merry months, from spring to fall!  
From summer's heat to winter's cold  
You bring me happiness untold.  
Unbid, you serve my least behest—  
I know not which I love the best!

DANCE AND CURTAIN.

## PHILALOO

BY GEO. R. SIMS

**H**IS name was Phil. How he came to be called Philaloo it would have puzzled the oldest inhabitant of the district to say.

Of course the inhabitant wouldn't have had to be very old, because Philaloo was only ten.

He lived in a little narrow court of old-fashioned, tumble-down houses just at the back of the big warehouses and clanking cranes, and the red flags stuck out to warn the unaccustomed wayfarer to keep in the middle of as much road as he could find between the waiting waggons and the water's edge.

Philaloo's father was a waterside labourer, but trade was bad on the Thames, and hundreds of men waited every day outside the wharves for the chance of a job that seldom came.

Philaloo knew that trade was bad. His father said so, and there was no money in the house, and only bread and butter to eat.

"The ships ain't coming up the river as they used to do," said Phil's father.

Phil knew all about the river. When school-time was over he used to take his baby sister, who was four, and sit in a doorway with her by Higgs's Wharf, and watch the ships and the barges and listen to the rattling cranes.

When his father had only had two days' work in three weeks Philaloo grew very anxious. What would the people of London do if the ships left off bringing them the things they wanted.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

But in the last bright days of November the trade of the river revived.

Phil pointed the fact out to his little sister as he sat with her on the doorstep of Higgs's office. Phil was born by the wharves, and he knew the seasons of the ships and the cargoes that they brought with them.

"It's Christmas comin' that's doin' it, Nellie," he said. "All them cases piled up at Brown's is stoned raisings for the Christmas puddens—and it's candid peel and crysterlysed fruits and figs as they're landing at Higgs's now, and yonder in the big crates it's oranges."

Along the riverside the crates and cases of good things for the great festival were rising in great piles; the narrow muddy roadway was blocked with vans and waggons, and all day long the cranes were swinging boxes and crates of luxuries up to the floors of the huge warehouses. The world was pouring its golden store of rich produce into the lap of London. And Philaloo and his little sister, hungry and pinched and cold, looked on from the doorstep of Higgs's office.

"It looks all right," said Philaloo, "but of course it can't be; if trade was good father would have got took on again, but he hasn't. Poor father!"

The boy's eyes filled with tears. Day after day he had seen his father come wearily home from the fruitless search for work. He knew how desperate things were becoming. He knew what it meant to his mother when he and his little sister were hungry and she had no food to give them.

The children were hungry—very hungry—as they sat by the riverside and saw the ships yielding up their store, and the great warehouses becoming gorged with good things for the Christmas market.

A stout, dapper little gentleman came from the wharf and Philaloo got up. "It's Mr. Higgs," he said to his little sister. The wharfinger stepped briskly up the steps, not noticing the

## THE QUEEN'S CAROL PHILALOO

children. But before he could enter the door Philaloo spoke to him.

"Mr. Higgs," he called out nervously.

The wharfinger turned and stared. "Well, my little man," he said, "what is it?"

"Please, sir, when do you think as trade'll be all right again?"

The wharfinger looked at the fair-haired, blue-eyed little lad curiously. He saw that his thin clothes were old and patched, and that he looked half-starved.

"It's a queer question for you to ask," he said. "Why do you want to know?"

"'Cos o' father, sir. He ain't only had two days this three weeks, and so we haven't got anything at home. But he tells mother not to fret. It'll be all right when trade gets better. Of course he'll get took on then."

It was no new tale for a Thames-side wharfinger to hear, but the pathos of it from the lips of a child gave it a new force.

"I see," he said. "Well, I think if your father comes along to-morrow morning, trade'll be good enough for me to take him on."

"Oh, I'm so glad," exclaimed Philaloo. "I'll go and tell him now."

He picked the little girl up in his arms, and was hurrying off as quickly as he could, in boots that only long practice enabled him to keep on his feet.

The wharfinger stopped him.

"Wait a minute:—How am I to know your father in the crowd of men that will be waiting at the wharf to-morrow?"

"Please, sir, I'll bring him, and you'll know me."

"What's your name?"

"The men about here call me Philaloo, sir."

"All right, then; I'll tell my foreman that Philaloo's father is to be taken on in the first lot to-morrow. Good afternoon, Philaloo."

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

The boy hurried away, and the wharfinger looked after him with a kindly smile on his face.

It didn't take Philaloo long to get to the top of the narrow winding courtway and burst into the little room where his father was sitting by the empty grate, hunger in his eyes and despair in his heart.

"It's all right, father," exclaimed Philaloo, as he deposited "baby" gently on the floor. "Trade's got better, and you're on at Higgs's first thing to-morrow."

At seven in the morning Philaloo stood with a great crowd of riverside labourers outside Higgs's Wharf. A ship had just arrived alongside, and a number of hands were wanted.

But before any men were engaged, the foreman called out: "Is Philaloo's father here?"

"Yes, sir," shouted Philaloo, and pushing his way through the crowd he led his father proudly forward.

The great ships are still gliding up the river laden with the good things of earth for the Christmas feasts in the happy homes of England. Philaloo's father, thanks to Philaloo's introduction, is now a regular hand at Higgs's Wharf, and the gaunt spectre of want stands no longer by his hearth.

But daily along the riverside, by the wharves and at the dock gates, gather great crowds of men eager for work. And many a one, alas! turns heartbroken from the land of plenty—the great storehouses of the world's richest produce—to go back to his dear ones and a home in which there is no food.



BY ARTHUR J. GOODMAN



## IN CAMP AT JUNIPER COVE

BY GILBERT PARKER

A LITTLE brown sparrow came tripping  
Across the green grass at my feet ;  
A kingfisher poised, and was peering  
Where current and calm water meet ;

The clouds hung in passionless clusters  
Above the green hills of the south ;  
A bobolink fluttered to leeward  
With a twinkle of bells in its mouth ;

And the morning was silver with glory,  
As I lay by my tent on the shore ;  
And the soft air was drunken with odours,  
And my soul lifted up to adore.

Is there wonder I took me to dreaming  
Of the gardens of Greece and old Rome,  
Of the fair watered meadows of Ida,  
And the hills where the gods made their home ?

Of the Argonauts sung to by Sirens,  
Of Andromache, Helen of Troy,  
Of Proserpine, weary Dolores,  
And the Fates that build up and destroy ?

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

Of the phantom isle, green Thersea,  
And the Naiads and Dryads that give  
To the soul of the poet, the dreamer,  
The visions of fancy that live

In the lives and the language of mortals  
Unconscious, but sure as the sea,  
And that make for great losses repayment  
To wandering singers like me?

But a little brown sparrow came tripping  
Across the green grass at my feet ;  
And a kingfisher poised, and was peering  
Where current and calm water meet ;

And Alice, sweet Alice, my neighbour,  
Stands musing beneath the pine tree ;  
And her look says—"I have a lover  
Who sails on the turbulent sea :

"Does he dream as I dream night and day-time  
Of a face that is tender and true ;  
Will he come to me e'en as he left me ?"  
Yes, Alice, sweet Alice, for you

Is the sunlight, and not the drear shadow,  
The gentle and fortunate peace ;  
But he who thus revels in rhyming  
Has shadows that never shall cease.

# IN CAMP AT JUNIPER COVE

## JUNIPER COVE TWENTY YEARS AFTER

THE bay gleams softly in the sun,  
The morning widens o'er the world ;  
The blue-bird's song is just begun,  
And down the skies white clouds are furled.

The boat lies idly by the shore,  
The shed I built with eager care  
Is fallen ; and I see no more  
The white tents in the thrilling air.

The golden-rod holds up its plumes  
In the long stretch of meadow grass,  
The briar-rose shakes its sweet perfumes  
In coverts where the sparrows pass.

Far off, above, the sapphire gleams,  
Far off, below, the sapphire flows,  
And this, my place of morning dreams,  
The bank where my vain visions rose !

Sweet Alice, he came back again,  
Across the waste of summer sea,  
What time the fields were full of grain,  
But not to thee ; but not to thee.

She comes no more when evening falls,  
To watch the stars wheel up the sky ;  
Then, love and light were over all ;  
Alas ! that light and love should die.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

I feel her hand upon my arm,  
I see her eyes shine through the mist ;  
Her life was passionate and warm  
As the red jewels at her wrist.

Hearts do not break, the world has said  
Though love lie stark and light be flown ;  
But still it counts its lost and dead,  
And in the solitudes makes moan.

We school our lips to make our hearts  
Seem other than in truth they are ;  
Before the lights we play our parts,  
And paint the flesh to hide the scar.

Masquers and mummers all, and yet  
The slaves of some dead passion's fires,  
Of hopes the soul can ne'er forget,  
Still sobbing on life's trembling wires.

Fate puts our dear desires in pawn,  
Youth passes, unredeemed they lie ;  
The leaves drop from our rose of dawn,  
And storms fall from the mocking sky !

She lives, yet, still, I know she died,  
That radiant Alice once I knew,  
Who in her love was glorified,  
Whose life is sadness through and through.

I shall come back no more, my ship  
Waits for me by the sundering sea :  
A prayer for her is on my lip—  
And the old life is dead to me.

## THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

**I**N Martha's house the weary Master lay,  
Spent with His faring through the burning day.  
The busy hostess bustled through the room  
On household cares intent, and at His feet  
The gentle Mary took her wonted seat.  
Soft came His words in music through the gloom.

Cumbered about much serving Martha wrought—  
Her sister listening as the Master taught—

Till something fretful an appeal she made :  
“Doth it not matter that on me doth fall  
The burden ; Mary helpeth not at all ?  
Master, command her that she give me aid.”

“Ah, Martha, Martha ! thou art full of care,  
And many things thy needless trouble share.”

Thus with the love that chides the Master spake :  
“One thing alone is needful. That good part  
Hath Mary chosen from her loving heart ;  
And that part from her shall I never take.”

\* \* \* \*

One thing alone we lack. Our souls, indeed,  
Have fiercer hunger than the body's need.

Ah, happy they that look in loving eyes.  
The harsh world round them fades. The Master's Voice  
In sweetest music bids their souls rejoice  
And wakes an echo there that never dies.

BRAM STOKER.

## CHRISTMAS IN MEAN STREETS

BY ARTHUR MORRISON

CHRISTMAS is out of fashion. The anniversary is recognised still, but its observances are being put aside—by some of us at any rate. They are pushed into the background, as something to be ashamed of, or to be excused merely because they please the children. Now it is quite true that they please the children; and if anybody will take the trouble to think about the thing carefully, he will perceive that the great fault of ours nowadays is that we grown people are not childish enough. Christmas and its merry-makings—such of them as we still spare—are very fashionable indeed among the children, and I think they are more particularly fashionable among poor children. For them it is the great feast of the year—the one occasion on which they feel some right to count upon a day of well-satisfied appetite.

Now if people were only wise enough to understand, they would grow a deal more childish, for their own sakes. There is a vast amount of simple amusement waiting for the man or woman with the courage to be reasonably and wisely childish, once in a way, if no more; and I think that Christmas—or a day or two before it—is as good a time to choose as any. Boxing Day is ill placed. I am sure that if it came a day before Christmas, instead of a day after, we should be far less reluctant to pay out our Christmas-boxes—though, indeed, we might not pay them out to quite the same people.

Any man with a healthy strain of the child still in him can

## CHRISTMAS IN MEAN STREETS

get a deal of amusement out of a few hours in the poorer parts of London just before Christmas, or on the day itself; and if he will carry a few shillings wherewith to make little presents, he will get all the better fun, and do no harm. For the man who can be a child in a reasonable way will certainly have the child's choicest gift—imagination; and, strange as dull people may suppose it, imagination is the quality that guards one from imposition in such matters as this.

The shops in the cheap market-streets at this time please me more than those in Regent Street. The Regent Street shops—very much as usual to see, except for a casual hint of “Christmas Presents,” conveyed on a window-card—seem to patronise the festival in an easy, non-committal sort of way; while the shops in the cheap markets abandon themselves wholly to its service, and offer all they hold in honour of the day.

The sweetstuff shop blazes out into something more splendid than Aladdin's palace and the cave of the Forty Thieves, both in partnership together; and it is a matter of doubt which view is the more delightful: that from the street, which anybody may have for nothing, or that from within, where the shopkeeper and his customers may survey a row of small white flattened noses on the outer side of the glass. This is an occasion on which the purchased equivalent of one of your loose shillings will do immense execution among the small flattened noses.

Here in the bold light, before the sugar pigs and giant peppermint walking-sticks of the sweetshop; under the comic faces made of cocoanuts that stare down at Alps and Himalayas of oranges in the fruiterer's; in sight of the butcher's prize beeves with their ribbons, and his sucking-pigs sucking their very last at lemons; in the effulgence of the fishmonger's, which has turned poulterer's for the week, you may see glimpses of a sort of life—sometimes even surprise its secrets—that you might look for long enough in vain all the rest of the year in the back-streets where it keeps its abode.

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

So far as they affect our lives, things are what they seem, and not what they are; and so you may perceive what a tremendously serious business this is—this celebration of Christmas—in the eyes and minds of people whose pleasures are simple and rare, and paid for with hardly-spared pence.

You may see the careful workman and his wife giving vast consideration to the question of choice between turkey and beef—a perplexed question into which enter conflicting factors of price, weight, lasting power, proportion of bone, and prospect of gravy. And most certainly, if you look, you will see in these cheap market-streets marketers of more pathetic guise. The poor seamstress-widow will be there, gaunt and starved, rustily clad, red and sunken of eye, her wistful children clinging about her thin skirts. Her problem is tense and pitiful; for you must never forget that, to her and the people she walks among, Christmas means far more than it means to yourself. A day of short commons now and again, alas! is no strange experience for them, but for that day to fall on Christmas would be no less than a calamity. The day stands for a type of the year, and a bad Christmas somehow carries its bitterness into after life as an ill memory that sticks. Christmas is a sort of emotional stocktaking day; the losses, successes, joys, and sorrows of the year are reviewed, and faces are set toward the coming twelve-month's struggle with what courage and hope the day and its cheer may inspire, so that a merry Christmas may well chance to influence for good the fortunes of a whole year, and through that the fortunes of several lives. In these considerations, you, the man or woman of imagination, will readily understand the problem before the poor widow. To her, and to her children, Christmas is the thing it seems, not the very commonplace reality that it may be in the eyes of superior people who might presume to teach her a more scientific form of domestic economy, if they noticed her at all. So the poor widow—mighty poor in pence—between the memory of the happy Christmases that have



A QUESTION OF EMPLOYMENT

BY TOM BROWNE

"Do yer want yer steps washing mum? The young lidy wot cleans the steps for the woman opposite sys as 'ow you're a nice person to work for.'"



## CHRISTMAS IN MEAN STREETS

gone before, the foreboding of what may befall after this, and the anxious wide eyes of the eager little children to whom she stands providence—has grievous puzzle enough in her poor little piece of Christmas shopping.

It is, to begin with, a matter of fitting pennies, and fractions of pennies, and getting value for the uttermost farthing; and to begin with, all through, and to end with, it is an affliction to judge between the claims of Christmas and the days to follow. For the red-eyed widow, with her precious charge about her, walks on the edge of a chasm, into which all may fall at a narrow part of the road, by reason of a matter of sixpence; and, indeed, the road is sadly narrow all the way. Here in the flaring market-street the poor widow sees foul corners where lurk ragged, starved children, lying in wait to snatch the rotten oranges that the fruiterer flings away in the mud; and she knows, and shudders to remember, that between her own children and these there stands but a very small pile of pence, melting hourly, and dependent on a thousand unstable chances for its renewal. So that an extra penny—even a halfpenny—this way or that, demands anxious care; and, be it a wise or an unwise payment, it may cloud the day to which the little group looks forward.

And the whole poor little celebration—the treat that widens the children's wistful eyes by anticipation, that invests with an interest of joy, or of disappointment, every commonplace article of sale in this very commonplace street—the whole festivity is a matter of as many shillings as you may spend on your lunch any day of the week, and forget it.

If you will be a child again, and a poor widow's child (as well you may, being a person of imagination), and feel all such a child's emotions of delight and longing before the Christmas-trees bespangled with toys, the sugar pigs, the peppermint walking-sticks, the oranges, the many beautiful things that puddings are made of: you will know how great little things are to children—things being

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

always what they seem—and you will realise how bitter it is to turn away disappointed from one after another because of lack of the pence that command such joys for other children.

Whereupon, remembering yourself again, perhaps you will agree that Boxing Day is placed at the wrong end of the festival, and will signify your heresy in the most practical and immediate manner available. At worst it will be an amusement—a merely selfish amusement—but a very pleasing amusement, believe me.

We herd up together too much to-day, so that a man cannot see his fellow-man for the crowd; and this is the secret of a deal of thoughtlessness, which some mistake for callousness. Also, it may be in some degree the cause of our lessened regard for the spirit that once animated us all at Christmas; though it would almost seem to survive best among those who suffer most from the crowding.

**T**HERE'S a man who un-named shall remain,  
The reason I need not explain,  
He opens his heart,  
And he'll willingly "part,"  
For the starving his purse he'll drain.

Of writers, composers, and "potes,"  
He asks that, instead of their "groats,"  
They'll give him a terse  
Bit of prose, or some verse,  
A picture, tale, tune, or some notes.

F. C. BURNAND.

# NERO

BY STEPHEN PHILLIPS

O ALL the earth to-night into these hands  
Committed! I bow down beneath the load,  
Empurpled in a lone omnipotence!  
My softest whisper thunders in the sky,  
And in my frown the temples sway and reel,  
And the utmost isles are anguished. I but raise  
An eyelid, and a continent shall cower.  
My finger makes the city a solitude—  
The murmuring metropolis a silence:  
And kingdoms pine in my dispeopling nod.  
I can dispearl the sea—a province wear  
Upon my little finger. All the winds  
Are busy blowing odours in mine eyes,  
And I am wrapt in glory by the sun,  
And I am lit by splendours of the moon,  
And diademed by glittering midnight.  
O wine of the world, the odour and gold of it!  
There is no thirst which I may not assuage,  
There is no hunger which I may not sate.  
Nought is forbidden me under heaven!

Speech from the Prologue of NERO,  
to be produced at HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

# THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

BY HALL CAINE

## I.—IN OLD ROME

IT was a night in February. The air was dank and chill. I was invited to a reception at one of the Roman houses in the neighbourhood of the Capitol, and I walked to it by way of the Corso. The streets were dark and desolate. On a doorstep near the Via Condotti a woman sat selling newspapers. Two little children were with her. One of them lay asleep in her arms, the other played by her side. At the corner of the street going up to St. Silvestro a boy of six or seven was selling matches. His little face was very pale, and he coughed frequently in the damp air.

Going by the end of the Via Minghetti I saw that a number of persons were standing outside the office of the *Tribuna*. They were the sellers of journals in the streets, and were waiting for their papers. I went up to look at them. There were men, women, and boys, and they seemed to be thinly clad and badly nourished. The doors of the office were opened and they rushed in, snatched at the supplies that were handed to them, and fled back into the streets. In a couple of minutes twenty or thirty of them were flying down into the Corso crying "*Tribuna*," and fighting for the first sales. Within half-an-hour they would be all over Rome, sweating, panting, still running and shouting. I buttoned up the collar of my overcoat. In that chill air it made me shiver to think of the price they paid for their bread.

It was a beautiful reception. Inside the dark stone walls of the prison-like palace of old Rome, with its barred windows and

## THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

guarded portal, there was warmth and colour. Beautiful women in lovely gowns, and men with magnificent decorations. The brilliant apartments, the more brilliant company, the troops of liveried servants, the bright music, the bright talk. I stayed late, and returned as I had come, on foot.

The narrow, silent streets without seemed very dark after the blaze of many lights within. I was picking my way in the darkness when I heard the low, tired, hungry cry of a child. It was a little boy, apparently of four years, who at midnight was dragging his weary little feet home by the hand of his father. The man was evidently a seller of newspapers. Two or three unsold *Tribunas*, carefully folded, were protruding from the side pockets of his jacket. He was carrying a younger child in his arms asleep. A tall, thin, scraggy, underfed man of five-and-thirty. A few paces behind him there was a woman, also carrying a child, and I thought I recognised her as the woman with the children in the Corso by the Via Condotti. She overtook the man, laid hold of the other hand of the little boy who was crying, and between them the child dragged on, still crying in his low, broken, tired way, all up the street.

I followed them and spoke to them, and tried to comfort the little fellow with some *soldi*, but he took no notice; the *soldi* dropped out of his cold fingers, and he continued to cry. "Poor little man, he is very sleepy," I said; and the parents, who smiled and were pleased, said yes, he was very sleepy, but they were taking him home and would put him to bed.

The poor souls had their arms full. Why didn't I carry the little boy myself? Heaven knows I wanted to, but I did not. I appeased my conscience for the moment by giving a trifle to buy milk for the little fellow, and then turned away. As I went off I heard all the way down the silent street the same low, weary, sickly, hungry cry of the child. God knows how far they had still to go.

A long line of carriages stood waiting in a street near to one

# THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

of the great Embassies. Splendid horses in beautiful harness, and coachmen and footmen in liveries of buff and brown and blue, with cockades and fur tippets and gold braid. There was a great ball in Rome that night.

Going back by the Corso I came again on my little match-seller. He was propped up in the recess of a doorway, leaning his head on the plinth of a great pilaster. His eyes were closed, his pretty delicate face was very pale, and his tray of matches was almost slipping out of his fingers. He was fast asleep.

Oh, the cry of the children! The cry of the children! The little, helpless, innocent victims of the social maelstrom! All the world over their suffering cries to heaven, and woe to the dynasty or the government or the people that will not hear and heed them.

## II.—IN OLD ENGLAND.

About a year ago there died near Liverpool an old priest who was a saint. He had the dignity and strength of a fine old man with the sweetness and purity of a dear old lady. To him as to others the cry of the children was the saddest sound that broke along the shores of life, but he spent his best days in trying to appease it. In his early manhood he established homes for the rescue of lost boys, and in his old age he founded shelters for fallen girls. His fellow-townsmen erected a statue to him while he was still alive.

He was always poor, and at one period he held the position of Roman Catholic chaplain in the county gaol. Many a story he used to tell of his prison life, and one of them lives vividly in my mind—it is so terrible, so tender, so horrible, so beautiful, so hellish, and so heavenly.

One night a young woman in the wildest frenzy of drunkenness was brought to the neighbouring police-court charged with the murder of her husband. When she came to herself in the morning

## THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

and asked why she was there, and was told she had killed somebody, her agony and shame were pitiful.

"Oh, my poor husband! Does he know what I have done? Oh, what will he say to me now?"

They told her that it was her husband himself whom she had murdered, and then her remorse knew no bounds. The Father was with her every day and all day, confessing her, comforting her, cheering her, praying with her, holding up the cross to her dark soul in her dark cell.

The woman was tried and condemned to penal servitude for life, but nothing the law could do to her was half so terrible as what she had done to herself. She had a child, a little girl, two or three years of age, and the worst part of her punishment was the dread of what would happen to the little one when she was gone. The Father promised to take care of the child, and then peace came to the poor broken wreck of womanhood, and she went away to her long imprisonment.

Somewhere in the lowest slums of Liverpool the Father found the little orphan, and, late one night, he carried her home to his own house in his arms.

"Do you mind having a child in the house until I can get somebody to adopt it?" he asked his housekeeper, and the good soul consented.

The child proved to be the sweetest and most lovable little thing, and the Father became very fond of her. After a little while she forgot all about her dead father, and began to climb on the living Father's knee, and to put her arms about his neck. Her bright eyes and prattling tongue made perpetual sunshine in the priest's house, and he was in no hurry to send her away from it. So two years passed, and every night before he went to bed the Father went into the child's room to look at her as she lay asleep, and every morning she came bounding to meet him when he came down to breakfast.

But there are reasons why a child cannot live in the house

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

of a priest, and when at length the Father heard of a lady in the country, a childless wife, who might wish to adopt a daughter, he asked her to take his little foundling.

"Send the child to my sister's in town, and I'll call to see her," said the lady.

"Make sure first," said the Father. "Don't see my little May unless you are quite certain you wish to adopt a child, for if you do see her she has such winsome little ways that she'll make you take her."

"Send her to my sister's," said the lady, and the child was sent, combed and curled, and with a bouquet of flowers for her future mother.

As soon as she was shown into the drawing-room where the sisters sat together the little thing walked up and gave the flowers to the right one. That settled everything in an instant, and when the Father arrived half-an-hour afterwards the child was sitting on the lady's lap, and the room was like a nest of song-birds.

Four years passed, and then the lady's husband died, and in her grief after her bereavement she resolved to become a nun, so the child came back to the house of the priest. She was now eight years of age, and prettier and more lovable than before. The Father would have liked to keep her altogether, but he could not do that, and after a while he began to talk of another mother. She used to come in for dessert after dinner, and one night, from the other side of the table, she looked up and said—

"Father, you won't send your little May away any more, will you?"

It nearly broke the old priest's heart, but it had to be done, and in due course the child was sent to a convent school, the Father paying for her food, and two poor shop-girls providing her with clothing.

At fourteen years of age the girl came back to the priest's



BY DUDLEY HARDY



## THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

house for the last time, and then preparations were made for sending her to Canada.

It was a silent but tragic time. What affection for the Father beside the spiritual one had grown up in the child's heart, what fearful and happy thoughts, what vague and secret surmises, only God Himself could say. She had never been told about her parents, and she had never spoken about her father, but now she asked who and what her mother had been. It was a terrible question, and it had to be answered. Her origin was not altogether unknown. She might hear of it from somebody, and there was much danger of misunderstanding. It was best she should learn the truth from the lips she loved.

So the Father told her everything, gently, tenderly, pitifully, affectionately—that her own father was dead, and her mother worse than dead, a criminal still lying in a gaol.

It was a fearful shock; but the brave heart of the girl survived it. She went away to Canada, and became, after a time, a clerk in a railway office, and finally married a railway contractor. The Father went over to the wedding. He crossed the ocean more than once afterwards to visit her. The last time he saw her she had two beautiful children, and was the most beloved and influential lady in the section of country in which she lived.

One day the old priest, back at work in his Refuge, received an official message from a State prison. A female convict, who was ill, had expressed an earnest wish to see him. It was the mother of May.

He found her in the infirmary. She was dying, and the thoughts of the poor woman, who was now old, were going back to earlier days. She wished to know what had become of her child. Had the Father kept his word, and found her and rescued her? Was she alive and doing well?

The Father told her all. Sitting by the bed of the poor convict in the prison infirmary he told her the long, sweet,

## THE QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

delicious story, down to the time of the marriage. She could not hear enough of it, and when he showed her a photograph of her daughter as she appeared on the wedding-day her tears flowed thick and fast.

"My little May! My own little May! Thank God! Thank God!"

And now the Father himself is gone. God sends such ministering angels on to the earth to atone for the selfishness of some of us.

# A NEW YEAR CHORALE

Words by  
Rev. GREGORY SMITH, LL.D.

Music by the late  
Sir HERBERT CAKELEY, Mus. Doc.  
Composer for Scotland to H.M. King EDWARD VII.

\* ♩ = 83.

The tide of years is roll - ing .. on, And now an - o - ther

year .. is gone; The end of .. all things soon .. will come,

O may it .. bring us near .. our Home! A - - men.

## II.

*p* All things around us fade and die—  
All earthly hopes are vanity:  
*f* O let our restless hearts be stayed  
*ff* On Him whose glories never fade!

## III.

(In unison.) *mf* O Lord of Love, let not the Past  
*p* Rise up against us at the Last,  
*mf* O Shepherd of our souls, be near,  
*f* To guide us through the coming year!

## IV.

*ff* All praise to Him who reigns on High,  
Enthronéd everlastingly;  
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
Sing, born of men, sing Heavenly Host. Amen.

\* Original and preferable key, F sharp.

† Small notes are for Organ.

## ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

I WAS visiting one Christmas Day with supplies for Christmas dinners the houses in East London where I had reason to think that there might be none. I knocked at a door which opened out of one of those narrow little courts of which East London is full, and there I saw a sight which I shall never forget. As I expected, there was for dinner only a little bread and cheese ; there was no fire in the grate ; but a working man had tied three small candles upon a tiny Christmas tree a foot high, that the three little children who sat round might keep Christmas ; there were no presents under the tree, no oranges or crackers upon it ; there were the three small candles and nothing more. I never left a Christmas dinner behind with a better heart. It was a home of an "Unemployed."

May the Queen's Fund save many a home from such a cold Christmas this year !

A. F. LONDON.

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